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ABSTRACT

This practicum targeted a multi-service child and youth care agency in which lesbian women and gay men were implicitly excluded from serving as therapeutic foster parents. The setting in which the practicum project was developed, implemented, and evaluated is a not-for-profit, provincially chartered, and publicly-funded organization, headquartered in Edmonton, Alberta (Canada). The practicum was designed and implemented to advance the acceptance of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents within the agency. The strategy included developing and obtaining formal approval of amendments to existing agency policies on status/conditions of employment and human rights, and organizing and obtaining consensus on both a proposed operational statement regarding the approval of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents, and on changes to the existing materials used in the recruitment and selection of therapeutic foster parents. The results of this strategy were mixed. While consensus was obtained on adopting the proposed changes to existing recruitment and selection materials, no consensus was reached on employing the proposed operational statement on the approval of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents. Implications to these outcomes are discussed and recommendations are offered. Appendices include interview and questionnaire formats, existing and revised policies, operational statements, recruitment and selection materials, presentation materials, and meeting minutes. (RJM)

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ED 384 840

Changing Agency Policy and Practice to Support the Inclusion of Gays and Lesbians as Therapeutic Foster Parents

by

Danica Frazer

Cohort 60

A Practicum Report Presented to the
Master's Program in Child Care, Youth Care,
and Family Support
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Science

NOVA UNIVERSITY

1994

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Authorship Statement

I hereby testify that this paper and the work it reports are entirely my own. Where it has been necessary to draw from the work of others, published or unpublished, I have acknowledged such work in accordance with scholarly and editorial practice. I give testimony freely, out of respect for the scholarship of other workers in the field and in hope that my own work, presented here, will earn similar respect.

June 23, 1994 — Date

[signature] — Signature of Student

Abstract

Changing agency policy and practice to support the inclusion of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents. Frazer, Danica D., 1994: Practicum Report, Nova University, Master's Program for Child Care, Youth Care, and Family Support. Descriptors: Homosexual Parenting/Lesbian Mothers/Gay Fathers/Homosexual Families/Adoptive Parents/Foster Parents.

Within a multi-service child and youth care agency, lesbian women and gay men were implicitly excluded from being approved as therapeutic foster parents. This exclusion was due in part to existing agency policies which contained no reference to sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination. The implicit exclusion was further supported by recruitment and selection materials which exclusively reflected a traditional family unit.

The author designed and implemented a strategy intended to advance the acceptance of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents within the agency. The strategy included: (1) developing and obtaining formal approval of amendments to existing agency policies on status/conditions of employment and human rights; and (2) developing and obtaining consensus on both a proposed operational statement regarding the approval of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents, and on changes to the existing materials used in the recruitment and selection of therapeutic foster parents.

The results of the strategy were mixed, with only one of the two proposed policy amendments receiving formal approval. Also, while consensus was obtained to adopt the proposed changes to existing recruitment and selection materials, consensus could not be obtained to adopt the proposed operational statement on the approval of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents. Appendices include interview and questionnaire formats; existing and revised policies, operational statements, and recruitment and selection materials; presentation materials; and meeting minutes.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Background

The Setting in Which the Problem Occurs

The setting in which the practicum project was developed, implemented, and evaluated is a not-for-profit, provincially chartered, and publicly funded organization, which is headquartered in Edmonton, Alberta. The organization has a constitution, by-laws, and an elected Board of Directors which is ultimately responsible for all policy decisions, financial transactions, and for appointing an Executive Director.

The mission of the organization is to assist disadvantaged children, youth, and families across Alberta in developing the skills and supports needed to function independently and responsibly in their communities. The organization accomplishes this mission by providing a continuum of services in the least intrusive manner. During its most recent fiscal year, the organization operated 19 residential and community-based services throughout the province of Alberta, serving over 1,500 children, youth, and families.

Of the 19 programs currently operated by the

practicum organization, six are community-based therapeutic foster care programs. These programs are located in six different geographical areas throughout the province, and provide services to a maximum of 80 children and youth. While the practicum organization has been in existence since 1975, its therapeutic foster care programs are relatively new, with the first program being established in 1990. The operation of therapeutic foster care programs came about as a response to the provincial government's initiative to reduce the total number of residential placements within the child welfare system, and to replace these with community- and family-based placement resources. Based on both the concept of permanency planning, which stresses a child's need for human attachment, stability, and continuity of care and relationships, and on the belief that every child has the right to a "family," therapeutic foster care programs seek to provide treatment to troubled children within the context of a stable, caring family environment.

The children and youth placed in therapeutic foster care programs within the practicum organization

are between the ages of 6 and 18, are under temporary or permanent guardianship of the provincial Child Welfare Department, and are otherwise at risk of placement in an institutional setting. The majority of these children and youth have suffered severe neglect and abuse within their families of origin and, as a result, exhibit a wide range of high risk behaviours including prostitution, alcohol and drug use, physical aggression, fire setting, running away, suicide ideation, and suicide attempts. As well, these children and youth frequently demonstrate poor school performance, personal hygiene, and social skills. Finally, several of the children and youth receiving therapeutic foster care services have been diagnosed with various personality and/or conduct disorders.

The therapeutic foster parents contracted by the practicum organization to provide homes to these children and youth are individuals or couples who reside in those communities in which the therapeutic foster care programs operate. The therapeutic foster parents come from a wide range of backgrounds and possess varying degrees of experience and training in

working with children and youth. All prospective therapeutic foster parents who apply to the practicum organization are required to participate in an extensive application and screening process which includes: written application forms and autobiographies; police checks; child welfare information checks; reference checks; medical examinations; interviews; home studies; and 33 hours of pre-service training. Once contracted by the practicum organization, therapeutic foster parents complete mandatory monthly training and receive weekly in-home support and supervision from program staff.

Although staffing differs slightly among the six therapeutic foster care programs currently operated by the practicum organization, the staffing structure typically includes a Program Supervisor and one Placement Supervisor for every eight children in the program. All six Program Supervisors currently working in the therapeutic foster care programs possess a recognized diploma or degree, and have worked in the field of child and youth care for a minimum of five years. Their experience in the field also includes a

minimum of two years supervisory experience. Program Supervisors are accountable to their Regional Manager, and are responsible for the direct supervision of Placement Supervisors, recruitment, selection, and training of therapeutic foster parents, implementation of adequate case management and service delivery practices, and for ensuring that all financial and programming objectives are met. All Placement Supervisors possess a recognized degree or diploma in child and youth care, or a related field, and have at least three years of experience working with children and youth. Placement Supervisors are accountable to their Program Supervisor, and are directly responsible for the supervision and monitoring of the therapeutic foster homes.

Position and Role in the Setting

I began my career as a child and youth care professional with the practicum organization eight years ago, after obtaining a Bachelor of Arts Degree from the local university. Prior to obtaining my current position as program supervisor one and one half years ago, I gained experience as a front-line youth

worker, an intake worker, a staff trainer, and an assistant program supervisor.

As a Program Supervisor, I supervise and manage the largest of the six therapeutic foster care programs operated by the practicum organization. The program includes two full-time Placement Supervisors, one half-time Placement Supervisor, one half-time Family Support Worker, a consulting psychologist, 19 therapeutic families, and 25 children and youth. In addition to carrying out the standard supervisory responsibilities outlined above, I am a member of several agency committees including the Personnel Committee, the Current Trends Committee, and the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee. As well, I participate in the local Therapeutic Foster Care Placement Committee, the Therapeutic Foster Care Private Providers Group, and serve as the Vice-Chairperson of the provincial Foster Family-Based Treatment Association.

During my time with the practicum organization I have been involved in a number of problem solving initiatives, including the implementation of a new

service delivery framework and a competency skills instruction program. The most significant problem solving initiative, however, was my involvement in 1992 in developing and obtaining formal approval for a set of agency policies regarding the rights of clients and staff with HIV infection and A.I.D.S.

Given my experience in proposing innovative and potentially controversially policies, and given that the program I currently supervise is viewed as a respected leader within both the practicum organization and the local therapeutic foster care community, I believe that I am in a favourable position to develop and promote innovative changes to therapeutic foster care policy and practice.

Chapter 2: The Problem

Problem Statement

Within the practicum organization, few, if any, openly gay and lesbian individuals or couples applied to become therapeutic foster parents. Although other individuals or couples who represent so-called "non-traditional" family units, such as single parents and common-law couples, frequently applied, and were approved, as therapeutic foster parents, this was not the case for lesbian and gay individuals or couples. Even though members of the gay and lesbian community may possess all of the necessary qualities to provide stable, caring, and therapeutic homes to troubled children and youth, this particular segment of the population was implicitly excluded from consideration as therapeutic foster parents within the practicum organization. With respect to the recruitment and selection of therapeutic foster parents, agency policy and practice should support the inclusion of gays and lesbians, and should ensure that the suitability for foster parenting is "based on such criteria as the prospective foster parents' ability to provide a warm,

stable, nurturing environment for a child" (Uhl, 1987, p. 577), and *not* on the prospective parents' sexual orientation.

Documentation of the Problem

A review of the available literature on gay and lesbian parenting revealed that gay men and lesbian women are, through a number of means, both implicitly and explicitly excluded from becoming foster parents. While only a small number of states and provinces have laws or written policies regarding the "suitability" of gays and lesbians as foster parents, in practice most states and provinces discourage fostering by lesbian women and gay men. During the 1970s a number of gay and lesbian foster homes were established in some large Canadian and American cities, however, these homes set off a wave of controversy that, twenty years later, remains far from resolved. In the midst of the controversy regarding their "suitability," these homes faced both legal and moral challenges. Ricketts & Achtenberg (1990) cite the following examples of the challenges faced by these early gay and lesbian foster homes:

1974: Washington State. The Department of Social and Health Services proposed new regulations that appeared to exclude gay men and lesbians from consideration as foster parents, although a number of gays were already acting as foster parents there.

1974: Oregon. After a caseworker recommended to a circuit court judge that a 14-year-old "confirmed homosexual" be placed in a gay household, the Department of Human Resources prohibited the placement of any state-supervised children in gay foster homes.

1975: Vancouver. A judge ordered a 16-year-old gay youth to be removed from his four-month foster placement with a male couple, despite a lengthy hearing in which caseworkers, administrators, and expert witnesses all testified in favor of the placement. (p. 86)

One of the most dramatic examples of the controversy surrounding gay and lesbian foster homes occurred ten years later in the case of a Boston gay couple who had been licensed as foster parents in 1985

by the Massachusetts Department of Social Services. Less than two weeks after two young boys were placed with the couple, the Boston Globe wrote a series of editorials condemning the placement of children in gay foster homes. Like most states, Massachusetts had previously made no mention of gay or lesbian applicants in its foster care policy. However, then Governor, Michael Dukakis and the Department of Social Services accepted the Globe's accusation that "the absence of a specific policy (particularly an exclusionary one) was evidence of negligence," and the state set out to write a new and separate policy (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 99). The new policy, as signed into law, read in part as follows:

> And provided further that it shall be the policy of the Department of Social Services to place children in need of foster care exclusively in the care of those persons whose sexual orientation presents no threat to the well-being of the child. (Uhl, 1987, p. 580)

While this new policy did not *technically* exclude gay and lesbian foster parents, social workers were

instructed to "place children with relatives or heterosexual married couples whenever possible" (Sands, 1987). In implementing the new foster care policy, the Department also set new regulations which created a hierarchy of review of applicants and placements, in which "a homosexual's application, as well as those of other single applicants falling into the 'non-traditional' category, would be treated differently from an application of a married man and woman or other persons falling into the 'traditional' family category" (Uhl, 1987, p. 581). Finally, the Department implemented a Foster Placement Exception Approval Form whereby foster parent applicants and existing foster parents were required to state their sexual orientation. Although Massachusetts officials denied that the new policy and regulations were a blanket exclusion of homosexuals, the Secretary of Human Services did admit, in announcing the new policy, that "future placements with gay and lesbian foster parents were highly unlikely" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 99).

According to Uhl (1987), surveys conducted just

prior to the writing of Massachusetts' new foster care policy indicated that only two states, Florida and North Dakota, had written statutes which explicitly did not favour placements in gay and lesbian foster homes (pp. 582-583). Forty one states had no specific or official policy, although many had "unofficial" policies of not placing children in gay or lesbian homes. Given this general absence of specific policies, Uhl (1987) argues that "the importance of the Massachusetts policy is that it may become a model for states in revising existing policies or in developing new policies" (p. 577).

What the Massachusetts example only hints at, "but what has been true for many years, is that thousands of lesbians and gay men have, in fact,... been licensed as foster parents" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 87). However, prospective lesbian and gay foster parents have, for the most part, chosen to remain invisible. "A few have actively misrepresented their sexual orientation, but most have simply made no mention of it" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 84). Openly gay men and lesbian women who apply to become

foster parents, if considered at all, "are commonly investigated more extensively than most other people" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1987, p. 104). Thus, the general scenario for a gay or lesbian applicant is to hide his or her sexual orientation. As argued by Hidalgo (1992):

> At least 10 percent (10%) of the total population in the U.S. is lesbian or gay oriented....If the homosexual population is invisible in the agency, it could mean that the agency is sending an explicit or implicit message: "lesbians and gay men need not to apply" and/or "make sure lesbian or gay identity remains in the closet to avoid penalties and discrimination." (p. 126)

While the "suitability for foster parenting generally has been based on such criteria as the prospective foster parents' ability to provide a warm, stable, nurturing environment for a child" (Uhl, 1987, p. 577), this is not the case for gay and lesbian applicants. Whether through explicit or implicit means, it is clear that openly gay men and lesbian women are generally excluded from consideration as foster parents.

To determine the extent to which openly gay and lesbian individuals and couples have applied and have been approved as therapeutic foster parents within the practicum organization, telephone interviews were conducted with the Program Supervisors of the agency's six therapeutic foster care programs. The interview form has been included as Appendix A. The information gathered from the interviews indicated that of the 47 therapeutic foster families currently under contract with the practicum organization, none were known to be gay or lesbian. The same information indicated that, over the past twelve months, a total of 86 individuals and couples had applied as therapeutic foster parents, and that, again, none of the applicants were known to be gay or lesbian. In concluding the interviews, Program Supervisors were asked if current agency policy and practice, with respect to the recruitment and selection of therapeutic foster parents, appeared to: (a) support the inclusion of gays and lesbians; (b) support the exclusion of gays and lesbians; or (c) remain neutral with regard to sexual orientation. All supervisors responded that current agency policy and

practice appeared to support the exclusion of gay men and lesbian women, citing in particular the terminology used in the recruitment and selection materials.

In addition to gathering information through interviews with Program Supervisors, a thorough review was conducted of existing agency materials used in the recruitment and selection of therapeutic foster parents. All of the materials reviewed have been included as Appendix B. The review of this material indicated the consistent presence of what may be called "exclusionary" language and images. While the language and images used throughout the materials clearly supported the acceptance of heterosexual and other "traditional" family units, they did not support the acceptance of homosexual and other so-called "non-traditional" family units. For example, the recruitment advertisements and program brochures used by the practicum organization contained images of a "traditional" family, consisting of a mother, a father, and children. As well, the existing selection materials (application form, autobiography, and interview form) consistently used the terms *marriage,*

wife, husband, mother, and *father*. Finally, the list of initial criteria used in the selection of therapeutic foster parents stated that interested applicants must "be married or common-law 2 years, having no significant marital problems and able to work well together." Because the terms *marriage* and *common-law* do not legally apply in Canada to gay or lesbian couples, this particular criterion served to implicitly, although definitely, exclude lesbian and gay couples for consideration as therapeutic foster parents within the practicum organization.

In addition to the implicit exclusion of gays and lesbians reflected in the existing recruitment and selection materials, the practicum organization also maintained policies on employment status and human rights which did not include sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination. Copies of these policies have been included as Appendix C. Agency policy number 7.00.01, Status/Conditions of Employment, stated that:

> All employment decisions will be made solely on the basis of the candidate's ability to carry out

> the responsibilities of the position and the candidate's developmental potential. Employment decisions will be made without regard to sex, age, marital status, race, religion, place of birth, language or other characteristics which are not job related. (Policies and Procedures Manual, 1988)

Although this policy contained the clause "or other characteristics which are not job related," the policy still left open the possibility for discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, as one could conceivably argue that, in the case of therapeutic foster parents, sexual orientation *is* a job related characteristic. Furthermore, it would have been difficult to challenge this type of discrimination, as sexual orientation is also excluded as a proscribed grounds for discrimination in the province's Individual's Rights Protection Act (1990).

Along with its existing policy on employment status, the practicum organization maintained a human rights policy which did not apply to lesbian women and gay men. Agency policy number 7.30.18 read, in part,

as follows:

> [The agency] considers itself bound by the terms of the **Individual's Rights Protection Act** and has made a commitment to honour the principles embodied in this legislation. [The agency] will comply with any final decisions made pursuant to the terms of the **Act**. (Policies and Procedures Manual, 1988)

Because, as stated earlier, the province's Individual's Rights Protection Act does not protect individuals from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, this particular agency policy implicitly supported the exclusion of sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination. These two agency policies, in combination with the agency's existing recruitment and selection materials, were found to clearly constitute an implicit, although definite, exclusion of openly gay and lesbian therapeutic foster parents within the practicum organization.

Analysis of the Problem

In analyzing the problem from a broad societal perspective, there appeared to be two major factors

which contributed to the absence or invisibility of gay and lesbian foster parents within the practicum organization. The first factor which serves to exclude openly gay men and lesbian women from consideration as foster parents is the predominantly negative societal attitude regarding this particular segment of the population. The term commonly used to describe this negative attitude is "homophobia." Coined by George Weinberg in 1972, the term homophobia can be defined as any belief system which supports negative myths and stereotypes about homosexual people. Morin and Garfinkle (1978) more specifically define homophobia as follows:

> (a) belief systems which hold that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is justifiable; (b) the use of language or slang, e.g., "queer," which is offensive to gay people; and/or (c) any belief system which does not value homosexual life styles equally with heterosexual life styles. (p. 30)

Similarly, Marmor (1980) believes homophobia to be a fear that is deeply engrained and commonly felt by

heterosexuals in this society; a fear taught implicitly and explicitly through a variety of sources, including parents, friends, churches, and medical and legal establishments. Taking the definition one step further, Voeller (1980) characterizes homophobia as a *human rights issue,* noting that the methods of oppression and persecution of gays and lesbians are identical to those used on other minority groups. Supporting this view of homophobia as a human rights issue, Marmor (1980) argues that most gay men and lesbian women "ask only to be accepted as human beings and allowed to live their lives free of persecution or discrimination" (p. 20).

Despite requests and demands that basic human rights be afforded to lesbian women and gay men, some manifestations of homophobia remain rather wide-spread in our society. According to Herek (1984), polls conducted in the early 1980s indicated that only one-third of the adults in the United States felt that homosexuality was an acceptable alternative lifestyle (Newsweek Poll,1983), and more than one-half would have excluded homosexual persons from particular occupations

(Gallup, 1982). More recent polls, however, indicated a significant shift in homophobic attitudes. According to the Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario (1990), for example, a 1989 Gallup Poll indicated that a majority of Canadian adults favoured the granting of human rights to homosexuals. Similarly, surveys conducted in the United States in 1990 suggested that "a large majority of the American public generally favor anti-discrimination laws for homosexuals" (Harris, 1991, p. A1).

Unfortunately, this apparent support for the granting of human rights to lesbian women and gay men does not include their right to be parents - whether biological, adoptive, or foster. As stated by Chilman, Nunnally, & Cox (1988), "it is common for gays and lesbians to be discriminated against in this area based on the grounds that their sexual preference automatically makes them 'unfit' parents" (p. 127). According to Harris (1991), a 1989 Time Magazine-CNN Poll showed, for example, that only 17% of American adults said that gay couples should be legally permitted to foster or adopt children, with 75%

opposing, and 8% uncertain. The notion of gay men and lesbian women bringing up children may seem contradictory to those who assume that homosexuals are not inclined to propagate. As explained by Raymond (1992), "some critics of gay and lesbian parenting have argued that the 'choice' to be gay or lesbian carries with it a willingness to give up children" (p. 116). The notion of gay and lesbian parents may also alarm and disturb those people who disapprove of homosexuals as role models. Those opposed to lesbian and gay foster parents commonly raise concerns over the "trauma" they believe will befall children raised in such homes. Even liberals, argues Raymond (1992), "who generally defend the civil rights of gays and lesbians may be uncomfortable with the idea of those same gays and lesbians parenting or with the idea of gays and lesbians in intimate settings with other peoples' children" (p. 116). For example, in defending Massachusetts' anti-gay foster care policy, Representative Marie Parente stated:

> I'm not arguing homosexuality. I'm arguing children. I know homosexuals. They're very warm

> and caring and loving. But being a child of gay foster parents is just too much for a child to take. How could you people wish this on a child? Why would you let a little child go out on the playground and face this kind of ridicule? (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 88)

Similarly, in advocating for an anti-homosexual foster care policy in New Hampshire, State Legislator, Mildred Ingram, stated, "I'm not trying to take anyone's rights away from them. I'm just trying to protect the rights of other children. You can't convince me that's a wholesome place to bring up a child" (Sands, 1987).

Homophobic attitudes such as these can obviously dissuade or discourage prospective lesbian and gay foster parent applicants, so that they either do not apply at all, or choose to hide their sexual orientation. As argued by Terry (1992):

> Very few lesbians or gays will believe that their sexual orientation can be anything but a barrier. The fact is that qualifications of the individual should be the deciding factor. Reality tells us that qualifications would not be the deciding

factor if sexual orientation were known. (p. 138)

Since gays and lesbians in our society have for so long been "viewed as sick, immoral, antisocial and otherwise bad" (Herek, 1984, p. 2), it is not surprising that there exists wide-spread opposition to the idea and practice of gays and lesbians caring for children and youth. As stated by Ricketts & Achtenberg (1990), "the issue of homosexuality and children is so volatile, and homophobia in the child-welfare system so wide-spread, that no openly gay or lesbian parent can be assured of fair treatment" (p. 88).

The second, although closely related, factor contributing to the exclusion or invisibility of gay and lesbian foster parents is the rather narrow, although highly valued, societal definition of "the family." As stated by Chilman et al. (1980), "the socially acceptable prototype by which various family forms are often judged is the traditional nuclear arrangement" (p. 254). However, according to Ricketts & Achtenberg (1990):

If we define the nuclear family as a working husband, house-keeping wife, and children, and ask

> how many Americans actually still live in this type of family, the answer is astonishing: 7 percent of the total United States population. (p. 83)

As pointed out by Nett (1988), family experts have, for some time, been calling for flexibility in concepts of the family. In particular, family experts have been suggesting that legislators, courts, social service experts, and other policy makers adopt definitions of family which reflect the ways in which people actually live.

Despite these suggestions on the parts of family experts, policy makers appear to have been slow to recognize or accept "new" and "non-traditional" family forms, particularly those headed by gay and lesbian parents. As stated by Douglas Root of the Pittsburgh Press (1992):

> Members of the "new families" may be a growing majority, but the law and social custom don't recognize them. In courtrooms and in legislative back rooms, in corporate benefits manuals and in government social policies, definitions of "the

> family" lag behind reality. (January 19, 1992, p.A1)

In Canada, for example, the Canadian census definition, which has been in use since the 1941 census, "defines a family as consisting of a husband and wife, with or without never married children, or a parent with one or more children who have never married, living together in the same dwelling" (Nett, 1988, p. 27). Furthermore, a family is legally defined in Canada as a "group of persons *considered to be related* by blood or marriage" (Nett, 1988, p. 29). Nett (1988) points out that "this relatedness must be evident not just to the persons themselves or to a sub-group, but also *to the society*" (p. 29). As things stand now, Canadian society considers adopted and step-children to be like blood relatives, and in some provinces legally unmarried but cohabitating heterosexual couples are treated as if they were related by marriage. As pointed out by Nett (1988), however, "there appears to be little societal consensus that homosexual couples are a family, [although] a parent and a child constitute a family group, regardless of the sexual

preference of the parent" (p. 31).

Society has, to some degree, recognized, legally and otherwise, some new and non-traditional family forms, such as single parents and common-law couples. However, the "families created by lesbians and gay men are, of course, one of the 'new' family's most controversial manifestations" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 84). Although there are an estimated 3 to 5 million gay or lesbian families (biological, adoptive, and foster) in the United States (Sand, 1987), this non-traditional family form continues to be "burdened by the disapproval, prejudice, apathy, and ignorance of policy makers" (Chilman et al., 1988, p. 254). For example, in defending Massachusetts' anti-homosexual foster care policy, Governor Dukakis argued that it was essential to find the "best possible environment" for foster children and that, "all things being equal, a family with a mother and a father and brothers and sisters" constituted that best possible environment (Sands, 1987). Similarly, in a Washington court case regarding the placement of a teenage boy with a gay couple, the judge stated that "the substitution of two

male homosexuals for parents does violence not only to the liberal definition of who are 'parents,' but offends the traditional concept of what a family is" (Uhl, 1987, p. 595).

As reflected in these statements, sexual orientation seems to be a defensible rationale for public policies which support one particular family form over another. As argued by Weinberg (1972), this type of thinking represents the resentment felt toward homosexuals when "they are seen as constituting a threat to one's values" (p. 16). "Anyone who does not adopt a society's usual value system runs the risk of being seen as undermining the society" (Weinberg, 1972, p. 16). Based at least partly on homophobic attitudes, the traditional and highly valued societal definition of the family clearly contributes to the exclusion of gays and lesbians as foster parents.

In analyzing the problem within the context of the practicum organization itself and the province in which it operates, there were a number of factors which were found to contribute to the exclusion or invisibility of openly gay and lesbian therapeutic foster parents

within the practicum organization. Like most states and provinces, Alberta does not have a foster care policy which explicitly excludes gays and lesbians. However, in a recent discussion regarding gay and lesbian foster homes, a Placement Resource Specialist with the provincial Department of Family and Social Services stated that, despite the lack of a specific policy, department officials would likely not support openly gay and lesbian individuals or couples as foster parents, as such a move would be difficult to defend in the community (personal communication, January 12, 1994). A Foster Care Specialist with the same department confirmed this view, stating that, although a few openly lesbian couples had been approved by the Department two years ago, the Department had not yet approved, and would not likely approve in the future, any foster placements with these couples, due to a fear of negative public reaction (personal communication, February 1, 1994).

In addition to this "unofficial" government policy regarding gay and lesbian foster homes, the provincial government maintains an Individual's Rights Protection

Act which does not include sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination. At the present time, the preamble to the Act (1990) reads, in part, as follows:

> WHEREAS recognition of the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all persons is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world; and
>
> WHEREAS it is recognized in Alberta as a fundamental principle and as a matter of public policy that all persons are equal in dignity and rights without regard to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry or place of origin. (p. 2)

Although the omission of sexual orientation in this preamble has been challenged by various sources on several occasions, the government has repeatedly refused to amend the Act. In March of 1992, Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA), Marie Laing, put forth Private Member's Bill 228 which was intended to "expand prohibitive grounds of discrimination to include sexual

orientation, source and level of income, marital status, and political belief" (Alberta Hansard, March, 1992, p. 29). The bill failed to pass first reading in the legislature and the Act remained unchanged. During the same year, two MLA's brought forth on three occasions petitions requesting that sexual orientation be included in the Act. On all three occasions, the petitions were refused by the government (Alberta Hansard, March, 1992, p. 83 & April, 1992, p. 391).

In addition to being challenged in the Legislative Assembly, the government and its Individual's Rights Protection Act have been challenged by the Alberta Human Rights Commission. In a recent sexual orientation case presented before the courts in Alberta, the Legal Council for the Commission argued that the Act was in violation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982), and recommended that the Act be amended to include sexual orientation (Legal Council, personal communication, January 12, 1994). Although the current Chief Commissioner, Mr. O'Neil, and other past commissioners have supported the amendment of the Act to protect against discrimination

on the basis of sexual orientation, the provincial government has chosen to ignore the advice of these appointed officials.

Recently, the provincial government faced a public challenge to the Act. A gay and lesbian organization, called "Just People," had been founded with a mandate to ensure that sexual orientation is included in the Act as a proscribed grounds for discrimination. When asked about the group and its mandate, the Conservative Party MLA for Central Alberta stated that "under no circumstances would the government grant official support to that kind of a lifestyle" (CTV Alberta News, January 12, 1994).

The government's position on this issue leaves Alberta as one of the three remaining provinces in Canada to exclude sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination. This refusal to include sexual orientation in the Act both reflects and supports the generally homophobic attitudes of our society described earlier. Given an environment in which lesbian women and gay men are not even afforded the same basic rights as are other individuals, it is

not surprising that there were found to be few, if any, openly gay and lesbian foster parents within the practicum organization.

As stated earlier in this chapter, society has generally favoured neither the practice of gay and lesbian parenting, whether biological, adoptive, or fostering, nor the concept of new and non-traditional family forms. In order to determine attitudes within the practicum organization regarding foster parenting by non-traditional families, and in particular by gay and lesbian families, a questionnaire was randomly distributed to 15 therapeutic foster parents and to 17 staff and management members in the northern region of the practicum organization. The questionnaire has been included as Appendix D. On the questionnaire participants were presented with twelve non-traditional family forms and asked to answer the following question: *Do you believe that the following individuals and couples, who represent non-traditional family units, should, if they meet all other existing criteria, be approved as therapeutic foster parents?*. Results from the questionnaire were as follows:

Family Form	Yes	No
Single female parent	32	0
Single male parent	29	3
Single female/no children	31	1
Single male/no children	25	7
Single lesbian woman	20	12
Single gay man	14	18
Common-law couple/no children	27	5
Common-law couple/children	30	2
Lesbian couple/no children	13	19
Gay couple/no children	12	20
Lesbian couple/children	18	14
Gay couple/children	18	14

These results indicated that, among management, staff, and therapeutic parents within the practicum organization, there was generally less acceptance for non-traditional family units headed by gays and lesbians, than for other types of non-traditional family units. A number of respondents indicated that all twelve family forms noted on the questionnaire should be approved as therapeutic foster parents.

These respondents generally commented that neither family form nor sexual orientation should affect the agency's decision to approve individuals or couples as therapeutic foster parents. Other respondents who indicated that gays and lesbians should be approved as therapeutic foster parents, qualified their answers by stating that the individual's/couple's sexual orientation should be revealed to neither the foster child nor the public, and/or that gay and lesbian foster homes would be appropriate only for gay and lesbian youth. Those respondents who indicated that gays and lesbians should not be approved as therapeutic foster parents generally commented that living in a gay or lesbian foster home would be emotionally difficult and confusing for a child, and/or that the public would not accept gay and lesbian foster homes.

The practicum organization, like the provincial Department of Family and Social Services, did not have a foster care policy which explicitly excluded gays and lesbians. Nonetheless, maintained and supported by societal attitudes, "unofficial" child welfare policy, and by official provincial legislation, the attitudes,

policies, and practices within the practicum organization resulted in an implicit, although definite, exclusion of openly lesbian and gay therapeutic foster parents.

Chapter 3: Goals and Objectives

Based on the identified problem, the overall goal of the practicum project was *to advance, within the practicum organization, the acceptance of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents*. To facilitate the achievement of this goal, the following objectives were to be obtained by the end of the ten week implementation period:

Objective 1

An operational statement will have been developed, and existing recruitment and selection materials, along with agency policies on employment status and human rights, will have been altered and amended to support the inclusion of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents within the practicum organization.

Outcomes

1. The proposed written operational statement explicitly affirms that individuals, including gays and lesbians, who represent non-traditional family units, and who meet all other core criteria, may be approved as therapeutic foster parents.

2. The proposed written amendments to recruitment and selection materials contain no exclusionary language, e.g., terms such as *husband, wife, mother, father,* or images which would serve to implicitly exclude gays and lesbians.
3. The proposed written amendments to agency policies on employment status and human rights include explicit reference to sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination.

Objective 2

Consensus, in the form of unanimous agreement, will have been obtained among members of the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee to adopt, and to include in the agency's Therapeutic Foster Care Operations Manual, the proposed operational statement and the amended recruitment and selection materials.

Outcomes

1. As documented in meeting minutes, consensus among committee members is obtained.
2. The operational statement and the recruitment and selection materials are incorporated into all existing copies of the agency's Therapeutic Foster

Care Operations Manual.

Objective 3

The practicum organization will have incorporated into its existing Policies and Procedures Manual amended policies on employment status and human rights which explicitly include sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination.

Outcomes

1. As documented in meeting minutes,the proposed policy amendments are formally approved by the Personnel Committee and the Management Team.
2. The amended policies are incorporated into all existing copies of the agency's Policies and Procedures Manual.

Chapter 4: Solution Strategy

Review of Existing Models and Approaches

Based on a review of the literature on gay and lesbian foster parents in particular, and on gay and lesbian rights in general, a number of models and approaches were identified. These models and approaches generally fall into four categories: (1) make no mention of sexual orientation; (2) obtain legal sanction for the licensing of gay and lesbian foster parents; (3) develop and maintain a separate policy and practice for gay and lesbian foster parents; and (4) develop and maintain a comprehensive policy and practice in which gays and lesbians are treated in the same manner as other prospective foster parents.

The "make no mention" approach, in which gays and lesbians are accepted as foster parents as long as their sexual orientation remains hidden, appears from the literature, to be a common approach among foster care agencies and government child welfare departments. As indicated in the literature, a significant number of gays and lesbians have, for a number of years, fulfilled a foster parenting role in our society.

However, as stated by Ricketts & Achtenberg (1987):

> For a variety of reasons...the issue of their sexual orientation was never officially raised or made public. Either they did not fit state or agency officials' stereotypes of lesbians or gay men and they were therefore not suspected of being homosexual, or their sexual orientation was known to caseworkers and was overlooked. (p. 92)

For the most part, "caseworkers, courts, and administrative staff have either looked the other way or succumbed to their presumption of applicants' heterosexuality" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 84). For example, the director of a foster home program in Washington D.C. commented:

> We've always had pairs of women providing foster care. In some instances, they have not been related. And, of course, that always raises questions in some people's minds. But as far as we were concerned, they were two friends who lived together and wanted to do this together. I would assume that some of the people who apply to be foster parents might be gay. But if they are, we

don't know about it. (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 84)

Despite the seemingly wide-spread use of the "make no mention" approach, Ricketts & Achtenberg (1987) argue that a growing number of lesbian women and gay men are expressing a desire to reveal their sexual orientation at the time they first apply as foster parents. "In this way, they hope to avoid problems that can arise from withholding information that may be discovered later, and to protect themselves and any children who might be placed with them" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 87). For example, the "make no mention" approach to gay and lesbian foster parents, may result in an increase in disrupted placements when "a parent's homosexuality is 'exposed' and agencies must respond to the public outcry" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 87). Furthermore, there is also growing recognition that "the phenomenon of secrecy, in and of itself, can be deleterious to children in a lesbian or gay home" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 87).

While the "make no mention" approach implicitly

supports the inclusion of gays and lesbians as foster parents, it may bring with it a number of additional problems, such as placement disruption, which can have a negative effect on the children placed in these homes. As well, it is essential to note that:

> The invisibility of lesbian and gay foster...parents - whether promoted by gays themselves or by the 'make no waves' ethic in most placement programs and agencies - can ultimately only contribute to the stereotypes of homosexuals as child molesters, sex criminals, and emotional neurotics. (Ricketts & Achtenberg 1987, p. 89)

According to Uhl (1987), the "make no mention" approach is common among the large number of states and provinces who have no specific policy, but who have "nothing in their regulations or guidelines prohibiting the placement of children in gay foster homes" (p. 581). Uhl (1987) believes that the lack of "official policy with respect to this matter may indicate a reluctance to formalize a policy and thereby possibly expose the policy to challenge in the courts" (p. 583).

The second, although less common, approach

identified in the literature is that of obtaining legal sanction for the licensing of gay and lesbian foster parents. In some instances, this approach has resulted in positive outcomes. The following examples of these outcomes have been cited by Ricketts & Achtenberg (1987):

> *1974: Philadelphia*. A family court judge approved the placement of a fifteen-year-old transvestite boy in the home of a lesbian couple after several unsuccessful placements in "straight" foster homes.
>
> *1981: Minneapolis*. A lesbian couple, who were already caring for a fifteen-year-old boy, were granted a license to take other children into their home. (p. 91)

Similarly, as cited by Uhl (1987), a Washington superior court interpreted the state's "1974 statute requiring a foster parent to be stable, loving and ready to meet the emotional needs of children, as allowing qualified homosexual foster parents to be licensed" (p. 595). Finally, in a child custody case in Ontario, Madame Justice Bertha Wilson stated that,

"in my view, homosexuality is a neutral and not a negative factor as far as parenting skills are concerned" (Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario, 1990, p. 23).

Although there have been some favourable court rulings with respect to gay and lesbian foster parenting, the literature indicates that, more often than not, legal sanction for the licensing of gay and lesbian foster parents is difficult to obtain. As stated by Rivera (1987), "systematic and widespread disapprobation of homosexuality is reflected in numerous court decisions" (p. 199).

With respect to gay and lesbian parenting in general, Uhl (1987) argues that the courts, as a result of homophobia, "make presumptions as to the lack of fitness of homosexuals to be parents, with no basis or clinical foundation" (p. 585). Although the recent trends in case law "indicate that the presumption of lack of fitness of a homosexual parent is not to be made...[because] the natural parent has...a constitutional fundamental right to bring up his or her own child....no such right to parenting has been found

in regard to the foster parent" (Uhl, 1987, pp. 588-589).

In addition to this apparent lack of constitutional rights, Rivera (1987) points out that several states continue to have antisodomy laws on their books. "Although these laws are rarely enforced, their existence has been a significant negative influence upon judicial decision making in the custody and visitation arena, and there is every reason to suspect a corollary effect with respect to adoptive and foster parenting" (Ricketts and Achtenberg, 1987, p. 94). For example, in an Arizona court case regarding the pre-adoption certification of a bisexual man, the court made the following statement:

> It would be anomalous for the state on one hand to declare homosexual conduct unlawful and on the other hand create a parent after that proscribed model, in effect approving that standard, inimical to the natural family, as head of a state-created family. (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1987, p. 95)

As argued by Ricketts & Achtenberg (1987), "statements such as these...make licensing of openly gay foster or

adoptive parents less likely" (p. 95).

In the absence of legal sanction for the licensing of gay and lesbian foster parents, the literature indicates that several agencies have developed separate policy and practice with respect to gay and lesbian foster parenting. In particular, these agencies have licensed lesbian women and gay men as foster parents specifically, and only, for identified and confirmed gay and lesbian youth. Examples of this practice have been cited by Ricketts & Achtenberg (1987) as follows:

> *1973: Chicago.* The Director of the Department of Children and Family Services revealed that children with "homosexual tendencies" were being placed in homes with gay foster parents.
>
> *1974: New York City.* An experimental program, sponsored by the National Gay Task Force, had placed about thirty homosexual teenagers in foster care with adult gay men or couples in the New York area.
>
> *1977: Washington.* A local child-placing agency notified the gay press that it was actively seeking single or coupled adult homosexuals to

> serve as foster parents for young gays.
>
> *1979: Trenton, NJ.* The Division of Youth Services revealed that the state had established its first homosexual foster home in 1975, and had continued to place a few homosexual teenagers with gay couples on an "informal basis" ever since. (p. 91)

Although this practice indicates a level of acceptance for gay and lesbian foster parents, it nonetheless contributes to the negative myths and stereotypes about lesbian women and gay men in general, and about gay and lesbian parenting in particular. As argued by Ricketts & Achtenberg (1990):

> Welcome as such a trend may be, certain biases clearly lie beneath it. In most cases agencies are reluctant to place "normal" adolescents with homosexuals - especially with those of the same sex as the child - for fear the lesbian or gay parent will "contaminate" the nascent sexuality of his or her charge. (p. 94)

Additional biases underlying the use of a separate policy and practice include those which state that

homosexuals will molest non-homosexual children, and that non-homosexual children will be stigmatized and embarrassed by a placement in a gay or lesbian foster home (Rivera, 1987).

Although gay and lesbian foster homes can offer a safe and accepting environment for homosexual youth which is otherwise often difficult to find, it nonetheless remains that sexual orientation should never be the sole criterion - exclusive or inclusive - in selecting foster parents. As proposed by the colloquium, "Serving Gay and Lesbian Youths: The Role of Child Welfare Agencies" (1991), agencies should "select prospective foster care parents...based upon their qualifications not their sexual orientation" (p. 18).

The final approach indicated in the literature is that of developing a comprehensive policy and practice which includes gays and lesbians. Because being an identified lesbian woman or a gay man means that "basic constitutional rights and security needs are threatened every day....programs, policies, and practices which treat qualified individuals without bias should be

developed, supported, and promoted" (Terry, 1992, p. 138).

Although comprehensive policies and practices are "always preferable" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1990, p. 101), the literature on gay and lesbian foster parenting reveals few examples of such policy and practice within child welfare departments and agencies. What the literature does reveal, however, are several examples of comprehensive policies within the human services field in general. For example, the National Association of Social Workers' (NASW) Revised Code of Ethics addresses the issue of discrimination with the following statement:

> The social worker should not practice, condone, facilitate or collaborate with any form of discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, national origin, marital status, political belief, mental or physical handicap or any other preference or personal condition or status. (Vederoff, 1986, p. 15)

In 1977 the NASW specifically addressed the issue of

discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation by adopting the following policy statement:

> NASW views discrimination and prejudice directed against any minority as inimical to the mental health not only of the affected minority, but of the society as a whole. The Association deplores and will work to combat archaic laws, discriminatory employment practices, and other forms of discrimination which serve to impose something less than equal status upon the homosexually-oriented members of the human family. (Gramick, 1983, p. 140)

With respect to parenting and foster parenting in particular, the American Psychological Association has adopted a resolution which states that "the sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation of natural or prospective foster parents should not be the sole or primary variable considered in child custody or placement cases" (Chilman et al., 1988, p. 127). Similarly, the American Psychiatric Association, in its 1986 Position Statement on Discrimination in Selection of Foster Parents, stated that "single factors (e.g.,

being a single parent, homosexual, or elderly) should not necessarily or automatically rule out the selection of a potential foster parent" (p. 1506). As stated by Dr. John Marmor, past president of the American Psychiatric Association, "I know of no evidence that predominantly heterosexual parents are more loving, supportive or stable in their parenting roles than homosexual men or women" (Vederoff, 1986, p. 21).

The literature on gay and lesbian rights in general also indicates strong support for the development of comprehensive policies and practices as a means of gaining acceptance and of securing rights and protection for lesbian women and gay men in our society. In a comprehensive history on the struggle for gay and lesbian rights, Marcus (1992) states that equal rights had "to be won...through churches; schools; the local, state, and federal governments," and that gay rights groups succeeded in convincing these institutions "to protect homosexual citizens from discrimination by adding sexual orientation or similar phrases to existing anti-discrimination policies, which often included provisions forbidding discrimination

based on race, color, creed, sex, and religion" (p. 258).

Although many politicians, judges, and administrators "continue to argue that 'the time is not right' for protecting the gay and lesbian minority, and that much more public education is required....this argument itself is proof that protection is an immediate necessity" (Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario, 1990, p. 13). In advocating for the inclusion of sexual orientation in anti-discrimination policies and human rights codes, the Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario (1990) argues that "the experience of other minorities has demonstrated that protection by the Code serves as an effective means of educating the public as well as protecting minorities from the acts of a prejudice few" (p. 13).

In order to effectively address the exclusion and invisibility of gay and lesbian foster parents, Hidalgo (1992) argues that it is necessary to make "changes and/or modifications in existing agency programs/policies that will result in making agency services and practices sensitive and responsive to

lesbian women and gay men - clients and staff" (p. 127). As opposed to the "make no mention" approach, or the developing a separate policy and practice approach, both of which implicitly perpetuate negative stereotypes of lesbians and gays, the comprehensive policy approach is based on the principle of equality and would support the inclusion of gays and lesbians as foster parents, for both homosexual *and* heterosexual youth.

Description of Solution Strategy

In order to achieve the overall goal of advancing the acceptance of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents within the practicum organization, the proposed solution strategy focused on: (1) obtaining formal approval of the proposed policy amendments from the Personnel Committee and the Management Team; and (2) obtaining consensus on the proposed operational statement and the proposed amendments to recruitment and selection materials among the members of the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee.

In implementing the proposed solution strategy, the author of the practicum report was responsible for

drafting proposed changes to existing agency policies on employment status and human rights, and for drafting an operational statement and proposed changes to the existing recruitment and selection materials. The author of the practicum report was also responsible for preparing and delivering presentations to the following groups within the practicum organization:

1. Personnel Committee
2. Management Team
3. Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee

The specific tasks involved in implementing the solution strategy are outlined in the Ten Week Implementation Plan in Appendix E.

The rationale for proposing policy amendments and for seeking formal approval of the policies was based on the idea that official policies are seen as representing the collective judgement and philosophy of the agency as a whole, and as overruling the personal preference of any individual. As governing principles, formal policies guide practice within the agency, and all individuals within the agency are responsible for knowing and respecting agency policy and practice.

Similar to agency policies, program specific operational statements represent the overall philosophy of the program and guide specific practice within the program.

The rationale for seeking approval of amended policies within the agency was also based on the fact that sexual orientation is currently not included as a proscribed grounds for discrimination in Alberta's Individual's Rights Protection Act. As argued by Terry (1992), "with legal sanction and enforcement, equal opportunity practices are difficult. Without legal sanctions, as in the case of lesbians and gays, equal opportunity practices are dependent upon agency policies, administrative directions, and administrative attitudes" (p. 139).

The rationale for proposing amendments to the existing recruitment and selection materials was based on the idea that policies and operational statements would be meaningless unless there were available materials and tools which would reflect their philosophy and facilitate their implementation. Finally, the rationale for obtaining consensus on the

proposed operational statement and the amendments to existing recruitment and selection materials was based on the belief that consensus would help to ensure standard practice among each of the six therapeutic foster care programs within the practicum organization.

Taken together, it was thought that the formal approval of proposed policies, along with the consensus on the proposed operational statement and changes to recruitment and selection materials, would result in a proactive and standardized method for supporting the inclusion of openly gay and lesbian foster parents within the practicum organization.

While the author of the practicum report was responsible for playing a major role in the implementation of the solution strategy, the existence of certain conditions, along with the involvement of other individuals and groups within the practicum organization, were necessary for the successful completion of the solution strategy. Specifically, it was necessary that the Personnel Committee, Management Team, and Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee meetings occurred as scheduled, and that

attendance at each of the meetings met quorum. As well, it was necessary that, in advance of each meeting, the respective chairperson approved as an agenda item the author's presentation on proposed amendments. It was further necessary that members at each meeting then gave approval to discuss the agenda item. The lack of these conditions and/or the lack of involvement on the part of certain individuals or groups may have served to impede the implementation of the proposed solution strategy.

With respect to successfully obtaining formal approval of the proposed policy amendments, it was anticipated that members of both the Personnel Committee and the Management Team would support the amendments, *in principle*. At the same time, however, it was anticipated that there may exist some resistance to the actual formal approval of the proposed amendments, due to concerns regarding the potentially negative reaction to such policy amendments on the part of agency funders, consumers, and vested community interest groups. With this anticipated resistance in mind, the author of the practicum report had to be

prepared to address these concerns as part of the presentation to be made on the proposed policy amendments.

While the potential failure to obtain formal approval of the proposed policy amendments would not have necessarily prevented the completion of the operational statement or the changes to the existing recruitment and selection materials, it would have ultimately inhibited standardized practice among the six therapeutic foster care programs, as individual supervisors and staff would not be bound by any formal policies supporting the inclusion or approval of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents. As well, the ultimate inclusion of gays and lesbians would have been inhibited, as it is unlikely that gay and lesbian individuals would apply as foster parents to an agency which does not include sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination in its human rights policy.

With respect to the proposed operational statement and the changes to existing recruitment and selection materials, it was anticipated that consensus would be

obtained among members of the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee. Within this group there were highly respected and influential agency members who, through their support, would likely help to facilitate the successful completion of this particular component of the solution strategy. Should there be a significant change to the group's composition in the future, however, the proposed changes would stand a chance of being maintained only if they were supported by formal agency policies. Without formal agency policies which support the inclusion of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents, any practices at the program level would be subject to change based on individual beliefs and prejudices.

Evaluation of the proposed solution strategy was conducted using the following methods:

1. Written minutes from the Personnel Committee and the Management Team Meetings indicate the formal approval or the non-approval of the proposed policy amendments.
2. If approved, the practicum organization's formal written policies on employment status and human

rights contain explicit clauses identifying sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination.

3. Copies of the formally approved policies are circulated to all programs within the practicum organization and are incorporated into all existing copies of the agency's Policies and Procedures Manual.
4. Written minutes from the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee Meeting indicate that consensus, in the form of unanimous agreement, is or is not obtained on the proposed operational statement and the changes to recruitment and selection materials.
5. If consensus is obtained, the practicum organization's Therapeutic Foster Care Operations Manual contains an operational statement which explicitly affirms that individuals, including gays and lesbians, who represent non-traditional family units, may be approved as therapeutic foster parents.
6. If consensus is obtained, the therapeutic foster

care recruitment and selection materials contain the proposed changes and contain no language, or images which implicitly exclude gays and lesbians.

7. The amended recruitment and selection materials are distributed to all therapeutic foster care Program Supervisors within the practicum organization and are incorporated into all existing copies of the agency's Therapeutic Foster Care Operations Manual.

Tne implementation of the proposed solution strategy was monitored as follows:

1. Confirming the scheduled dates, expected attendance, and agenda items of each meeting with the respective chairperson of the Personnel Committee, the Management Team, and the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee.
2. Reviewing written minutes from each of the above mentioned meetings.
3. Maintaining a written record of observations made at each of the above mentioned meetings.
4. Maintaining a written record of completed tasks.

Chapter 5: Strategy Employed

Report of Action Taken

During the practicum implementation period, the solution strategy described in Chapter 4 was utilized, although slight modifications were required. These modifications included: (1) the rescheduling of the Personnel Committee Meeting, the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee Meeting, and the Management Team Meeting; (2) the rescheduling of other tasks necessitated by the rescheduling of the above meetings; and (3) the omission of the presentation to the Management Team.

As described earlier, the solution strategy and the implementation plan focused on: (1) obtaining formal approval of the proposed policy amendments from the Personnel Committee and the Management Team; and (2) obtaining consensus among the members of the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee on the proposed operational statement and the proposed amendments to recruitment and selection materials.

Obtaining Formal Approval

The action taken to obtain formal approval of the proposed amendments to existing agency policies on status/conditions of employment and human rights included: (1) drafting the proposed amendments to the existing agency policies; (2) preparing presentations for the Personnel Committee and the Management Team; (3) delivering the presentations to the Personnel Committee and the Management Team.

The drafting of the proposed amendments to existing agency policies on status/conditions of employment and human rights was completed during the first week of the practicum implementation period. The proposed amendment to the policy on status/conditions of employment included an explicit reference to sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination. The proposed amendment to the policy on human rights included an explicit acknowledgement of the exclusion of sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination in provincial legislation, along with an explicit statement of the agency's intention to provide equal rights protection to gays and lesbians, despite

the provincial legislat ion.

The presentations to be made to the Personnel Committee and the Manag gement Team were also prepared during the first week o f the implementation period. The presentations focus ed on the human rights protection and the empl oyment of gays and lesbians in general, including the employment of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster p arents. As a supplement to the verbal presentation mad e by the author of the practicum report, written materia ls were prepared for all members of the both the Personn el Committee and the Management Team. The written mate rials prepared for the presentations included (1) a description of the problem; (2) a brief r eview of background and contributing factors; (3) an overview of gays and lesbians as foster par ents; (4) a description of the proposed solution and a mended polices; and (5) a list of suggested readings. A copy of the written presentation materials has been included as Appendix F.

The presentations to the Personnel Committee and the Management Team we re scheduled to be made during weeks two and six of t he implementation period,

respectively. Due to the rescheduling of the meeting, the presentation to the Personnel Committee occurred during week one of the implementation period. The presentation followed the originally planned outline which included an overview of the information contained in the written materials, along with a period of time for questions and discussion.

The Management Meeting was also rescheduled, and occurred during week ten of the implementation period. The planned presentation to the Management Team, however, was omitted at the request of the Assistant Executive Director. The request to omit the presentation was based upon: (1) concerns conveyed by the Provincial Board of Directors regarding the potentially negative reactions of funders and consumers to the proposed amendment of the agency's human rights policy; and (2) strong personal opposition to the proposed amendment on the part of several individual Board Members. As a result of the request, discussion at the Management Team meeting included only a brief introduction of the rationale for the proposed policy amendments, and an explanation, by the Assistant

Executive Director, of the Board's current policy position and its request of management to neither debate nor approve, at this time, the proposed amendment to the human rights policy.

Obtaining Consensus

The action taken to obtain consensus from the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee included: (1) drafting a proposed operational statement on the selection and approval of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents; (2) drafting proposed changes to existing recruitment and selection materials; (3) preparing a presentation for the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee; and (4) delivering the presentation to the committee.

The drafting of the proposed operational statement and the proposed changes to the recruitment and selection materials was completed during weeks three and four of the practicum implementation period. The proposed operational statement affirmed that individuals, including gays and lesbians, who represent non-traditional family units, may be approved as therapeutic foster parents. The changes to existing

recruitment and selection materials included: (1) the elimination of exclusionary language, e.g., terms such as marriage, husband, wife, mother, father, and the replacement of this language with the terms relationship, spouse, partner, and parent(s); (2) the elimination of the initial criterion stating that applicants must be married or common-law; and (3) an amendment to the existing operational statement on recruitment so as to state that exclusionary language and images would not be used in recruitment advertisements and program brochures.

Due to the rescheduling of the meeting, the presentation to the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee was prepared during week five of the implementation period, and was delivered during week six. Because the issue of approving gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents had been previously discussed and debated by members of this committee, and because there was a previously established knowledge level regarding the issue, the presentation to this group did not contain the same background information and detail as did the presentations developed for the

Personnel Committee and the Management Team. Rather, the presentation focused exclusively on explaining the details of, and the rationale for, the proposed operational statement and the proposed changes to existing recruitment and selection materials.

Results of Action Taken

As discussed in Chapter 3, the overall goal of the practicum project was to advance, within the practicum organization, the acceptance of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents. Three objectives were established to achieve this goal. Outlined below are the results achieved for each of these objectives.

Results Achieved for Objective One

This objective stated that an operational statement was to be developed, and that existing recruitment and selections materials, along with agency policies on employment status and human rights, were to be amended to support the inclusion of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents. The outcome measures indicated in this objective were as follows:

1. The proposed written operational statement explicitly affirms that individuals, including

gays and lesbians, who represent non-traditional family units, and who meet all other core criteria, may be approved as therapeutic foster parents.

2. The proposed written amendments to recruitment and selection materials contain no exclusionary language, e.g., terms such as husband, wife, mother, father, or images which would serve to implicitly exclude gays and lesbians.
3. The proposed written amendments to agency policies on employment status and human rights include explicit reference to sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination.

Each of these outcomes was achieved and, thus, Objective One, as stated, was fully met. A copy of the amended policies on employment status and human rights have been included as Appendix G. A copy of the written proposed operational statement and the amended recruitment and selection materials have been included as Appendix H.

Results Achieved for Objective Two

The second objective stated that consensus, in the form of unanimous agreement, was to be obtained among members of the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee to adopt, and to include in the agency's Therapeutic Foster Care Operations Manual, the proposed operational statement and the amended recruitment and selection materials. The outcome measures indicated in this objective were as follows:

1. As documented in meeting minutes, consensus among committee members is obtained.
2. The operational statement and the recruitment and selection materials are incorporated into all existing copies of the agency's Therapeutic Foster Care Operations Manual.

This objective was not fully met. While consensus was obtained to adopt the proposed changes to existing recruitment and selection material, consensus could not be obtained to adopt, and to include in the operations manual, the proposed operational statement on the selection and approval of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents. Reasons for the failure to

obtain consensus on the p
oposed operational statement
were two-fold. Firstly,
oncern was expressed about
approving this type of op
rational statement given the
currently negative and ho
nophobic political climate in
the province, and the rec
nt provincial and federal
controversies surrounding
gay and lesbian rights,
including the potential g
anting of spousal and family
status to gays and lesbia
s. Given these factors, it
was strongly argued by at
least one committee member
that an explicit acceptan
e of gays and lesbians as
therapeutic foster parent
would be supported by
neither the agency's fund
ng body nor the general
public. In addition, it
was argued that an explicit
approval of gay and lesbi
an foster parents would be
received negatively by th
e agency's consumers,
including foster children
, biological parents, and
social workers.

The second factor wh
ich appears to have prevented
consensus to adopt the pr
oposed operational statement
was an explicit statement
from management affirming
that the operational stat
ement would be in no way
supported by the Provinci
al Board of Directors.

Although the Board of Directors had proposed, at a Board meeting only two months earlier, a governance policy prohibiting discrimination of employees and volunteers on the basis of sexual orientation, a majority of Board Members had later argued that the policy should not apply to therapeutic foster parents. Some Board Members based their argument on perceived concerns regarding the potentially negative reaction of funders and consumers. Other members based their argument on a personal belief that a homosexual lifestyle precluded the ability to provide a stable, caring, and therapeutic environment - the ultimate criterion by which prospective therapeutic foster parents are assessed.

Given these events and circumstances, the agency's Therapeutic Foster Care Operations Manual does not at this time contain an operational statement which explicitly affirms that gays and lesbians may be approved as therapeutic foster parents. With respect to the proposed changes to existing recruitment and selection materials, consensus was obtained to adopt, and to incorporate into the Therapeutic Foster Care

Operations Manual, the amended materials. At this time, however, the amended materials have not yet been incorporated, as the materials require additional changes which are part of a larger agency project and which fall outside the scope of this practicum project. A copy of the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee Meeting minutes indicating the above mentioned results has been included in Appendix I.

Results Achieved for Objective Three

The final objective established for achieving the practicum goal stated that the agency would have incorporated into its existing Policies and Procedure Manual amended policies on employment status and human rights which explicitly include sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination. The outcome measures indicated in this objective were as follows:

1. As documented in meeting minutes, the proposed policy amendments are formally approved by the Personnel Committee and the Management Team.
2. The amended policies are incorporated into all existing copies of the agency's Policies and Procedures Manual.

This objective and the specified outcomes were not fully achieved during the practicum implementation period. At the Personnel Committee level, formal approval was given for the proposed amendments to both the policy on status/conditions of employment and the policy on human rights. Among the committee members there was very little debate surrounding the proposed amendments, and the amendments were ultimately given unanimous approval. Although considerable debate was expected at this level, a presentation, earlier in the meeting, of the recently proposed governance policies is believed to have influenced, to some degree, the voting on the proposed policy amendments. As explained to committee members, the governance policies had recently been proposed by the Provincial Board of Directors with the purpose of establishing broad guidelines within which all agency policy and practice must operate. Included in the proposed governance policies was a statement affirming that the agency would maintain neither policies nor practices which would result in discrimination against employees or volunteers on the basis of sexual orientation.

Although the proposed policy amendments on employment status and human rights may have been approved by the Personnel Committee even in the absence of the governance policies, the lack of anticipated debate and discussion, along with the unanimous vote of approval, indicated to the author that some committee members may have felt that, in light of the governance policy, they had no choice but to vote in favour of the proposed policy amendments. The Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes indicating these results have been included in Appendix I.

While both of the proposed policy amendments received approval at the Personnel Committee level, only one of the policy amendments was approved at the Management Team level. As indicated in the Management Meeting Minutes included in Appendix I, the amendment to the policy on status/conditions of employment was approved. Although discussion during the meeting indicated general support for the policy amendment, the decision to approve the policy was explicitly stated to have been based upon the existence of the above mentioned governance policy being proposed by the

Provincial Board of Directors. During the discussion surrounding the amendment to the policy on employment status, it was explicitly stated, however, that the amended policy would apply only to employees, and that therapeutic foster parents could not be technically classified as employees, given the required hours and the tax-exempt status of their work. Therefore, although the amended policy, which explicitly prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, was approved, it will not serve to protect prospective gay and lesbian foster parents from discrimination.

With respect to the proposed amendment to the existing agency policy on human rights, the Management Team was unable to grant formal approval. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the Provincial Board of Directors had requested that this particular policy amendment be neither debated nor approved at this time. Because the proposed amendment to the human rights policy would affirm a commitment of non-discrimination against any individuals - not just employees - on the basis of sexual orientation, the policy would serve to protect prospective gay and lesbian therapeutic foster

parents. As explained by the Assistant Executive Director, discussions at a recent Board Meeting clearly indicated that, while the Board Members were in favour of protecting employees from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, they were not willing at this time to extend the same protection to therapeutic foster parents.

Although the existence of the Board's governance policy on non-discrimination appears to have positively influenced the voting on policy amendments at the Personnel Committee level, the same governance policy had the opposite impact at the Management Team level. The reason for this discrepancy in impact is quite simple. At the time of the Personnel Committee Meeting, the issue of gay and lesbian foster parents being protected under the governance policy had yet to be realized or discussed at the Board level. However, prior to the Management Team Meeting, the issue was presented and discussed at a Provincial Board of Directors Meeting. At this time, Board Members formulated their arguments for excluding therapeutic foster parents from the governance policy. A copy of

the proposed governance policies have been included in Appendix J.

Because the proposed amendment to the human rights policy was not given final approval at the Management Team level, the policy will remain in its existing form in the agency's Policies and Procedures Manual. The approved amendment to the policy on status/conditions of employment, on the other hand, was circulated to all agency programs for inclusion in their Policies and Procedures Manual.

Analysis of Results

As indicated by the results described above, the practicum organization was unwilling to approve policy and practice which would explicitly support the inclusion of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents. As discussed earlier, the decision by the Management Team to approve the proposed amendment to the existing policy on status/conditions of employment, while at the same time rejecting the proposed amendment to the existing policy on human rights, was based upon a clear direction given by the Board of Directors. The concerns expressed by the Board of Directors, along

with the ultimate policy decisions, indicate both a discomfort with the idea of gays and lesbians caring for children, and a level of fear about making explicit any support which may, in fact, exist. Similarly, the decision by the Intra-agency Treatment Foster Care Committee to adopt the proposed changes to existing recruitment and selection materials, while at the same time rejecting the proposed operational statement, reflects, on the one hand, an implicit support for the inclusion of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents, and, on the other hand, a level of fear or anxiety about making that support explicit.

Any fears and anxieties which may have already existed within the agency regarding the inclusion of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents appear to have been exacerbated by current events which drew attention to, and caused heated public debate about, both gay and lesbian rights in general and about gay and lesbian parenting in particular. During the practicum implementation period, three specific events may have served to increase existing anxieties, and to have impacted the eventual outcomes of the practicum

project.

The first event involved the April 12, 1994 court ruling in the case of Delwin Vriend, a local college instructor who had been fired because he was homosexual. In this particular case, the judge ruled that Alberta's Individual's Rights Protection Act is "inconsistent with Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms because it does not ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation" (Nemeth, 1994, p. 43). As explained by Nemeth (1994), the judge also ruled that the Alberta Human Rights Commission, "which refused to hear Vriend's case three years ago, must accept such cases...effectively protecting gays from discrimination" (p. 43). Despite this court ruling, the Alberta government maintained its refusal to amend the province's Individual's Rights Protection Act, and announced its intention to appeal the court decision. As reported by Nemeth (1994), Labour Minister Stockwell Day argued that the legislature - not the courts - should decide whether to include sexual orientation in Alberta's human rights act. Further, Day stated that "he opposed inclusion because it could lead to spousal

benefits and adoption rights for homosexual couples. 'This is Alberta,' he said, 'and I don't sense that I have a mandate from my constituents that they would like those things to happen.'" (Nemeth, 1994, p. 43).

Shortly following the Alberta court ruling, Federal Justice Minister Allan Rock announced that the Liberal government was considering amendments to Canadian laws to ban discrimination against homosexuals. Although sexual orientation is not explicitly mentioned in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Rock argued that "the courts have ruled in recent years that it is an 'analogous ground' - and must be read into both" (Steele, 1994, p. 42). While Rock appeared to be committed to banning discrimination against gays and lesbians, he did qualify his position by stating that he did not favor the "unduly provocative" approach "that involves redefining family and spouse" (Jenish, 1994, p. 11).

The third event which may have served to increase anxieties and influence the outcome of the practicum project was the announcement by the Ontario provincial government that it was going to allow a free vote on

legislation enshrining full recognition of homosexual relationships. The legislation, known as Bill 67, was the first of its kind in Canada and would have given same-sex couples the right to apply to adopt children, to receive spousal benefits when a partner dies, and to be eligible for other employee benefits. While Ontario Attorney General Marion Boyd stated that this issue was considered one of "fundamental human rights," provincial Liberal leader Lyn McLeod said she "intend[ed] to vote against the legislation because it would mean a fundamental change to the definition of the family" ("Narrow Victory", 1994, p. 14). While the introduction of this bill was, in one sense, a matter limited to the province of Ontario, the outcome had implications for the entire country, including the possible redefinition of the family, and the resulting corollary effects on gay and lesbian adoptive and foster parenting.

Although the actions and statements by both the provincial government in Ontario and the federal Liberal government indicated a clear level of official support for gay and lesbian rights, the situation

remains clearly different in Alberta, the province in which the practicum organization must continue to operate. The Alberta government, which so adamantly opposes any rights for gays and lesbians, is the same body which provides 90 percent of the practicum organization's funding. Even though there may exist within the agency some level of support for changing agency policy and practice to support the inclusion of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents, there exists, at the same time, a strong belief that explicit agency support for gay and lesbian foster parents would seriously impair the relationship between the agency and the provincial government, and thus jeopardize funding and the level and quality of service delivery.

Overall, the results of the practicum project appear to constitute a compromise which reflects current events and attitudes within the province of Alberta. The decision by both the Board of Directors and the Management Team to approve a policy which would ban discrimination against employees on the basis of sexual orientation is certainly in line with the recent

court ruling in the Vriend case. On the other hand, the decision to reject both the policy and the operational statement which would protect prospective therapeutic foster parents against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation reflects, to some degree, both the provincial government's stated position on the issue of gay and lesbian rights, and society's general discomfort with homosexual relationships. As stated by Julie Friesen, a lesbian provincial civil servant, "people can agree on social justice issues theoretically, but when they have to recognize our actual relationships they become a little less comfortable" (Maclean's, May 16, 1994, p. 40).

While there was little support within the agency for explicitly supporting the inclusion of gay and lesbian foster parents, neither was there any apparent support for proposing agency policy and practice which would explicitly exclude gay and lesbian foster parents. In fact, there was unanimous support for the proposed changes to recruitment and selection materials which indicated some level of implicit approval, and eliminated, to some degree, the implicit exclusion

within the agency of gay and lesbian therapeutic foster parents.

Based on what then could be seen as an implicit acceptance of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents, the results of the practicum project most closely reflect the "make no mention" approach described in Chapter 4. Within this particular approach, an agency neither explicitly supports nor explicitly excludes gays and lesbians as foster parents. Gays and lesbians are able to become foster parents as long as their sexual orientation remains hidden. Through approving the proposed changes to existing recruitment and selection materials, which serve to make the materials non-exclusionary and relevant to a wide range of family forms, including gays and lesbians, the agency is sending an implicit message that gays and lesbians are welcome to apply as therapeutic foster parents. However, through the failure to approve the proposed amendment to its human rights policy and to adopt the proposed operational statement, the agency is unwilling to provide explicit support to gay and lesbian foster parent applicants.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

As detailed in the previous chapter, the outcomes for the established objectives were mixed, with only one of the two proposed policy amendments receiving formal approval. Also, while consensus was obtained to adopt the proposed changes to existing recruitment and selection materials, consensus could not be obtained to adopt the proposed operational statement on the approval of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents. Essentially, these outcomes have resulted in what can be called the "make no mention" approach to the issue of gay and lesbian foster parents.

Implications

Clearly, the decision to explicitly support non-traditional placements in the form of gay and lesbian foster homes is neither an easy decision nor one to be taken lightly. An agency involved in such placements must understand the implications involved and be prepared to make a commitment to the philosophy of such placements. At the same time, the decision not to explicitly support such placements also requires a thorough understanding of the reasons for, and the

possible implications of, that decision. The reluctance, on the part of the practicum organization, to make changes to agency policy and practice which would support the inclusion of gay and lesbian foster parents is, to some degree, understandable given the current political and social climate in which the organization operates. Nonetheless, the outcomes of the practicum project have implications for the agency in the following areas: (1) the impact on service delivery to children and youth in general, and to gay and lesbian youth in particular; (2) the role of advocacy and agency influence on public policy; (3) external legal challenges to agency policy and practice; and (4) internal inconsistencies in agency policy and practice.

With respect to the impact on service delivery to gay and lesbian youth, the agency has placed itself in a difficult and contradictory position. While existing agency policy and practice prohibit discrimination against gay and lesbian youth within the agency, they, at the same time, facilitate and condone discrimination against a group of gay and lesbian adults. This

obvious contradiction reinforces the same negative myths and stereotypes about homosexuality which make life so difficult for gay and lesbian youth in our society. As an agency that serves children and youth, we must ask ourselves if, through our policy and practice regarding gay and lesbian therapeutic foster parents, we are helping or hurting those gay and lesbian youth with whom we work.

In addition to the direct impact on gay and lesbian youth, the "make no mention" approach currently being taken by the practicum organization holds several implications for the service delivery to children and youth in general. As indicated in the literature, this type of approach to gay and lesbian foster parents encourages homosexual applicants to "hide" their sexual orientation. This action can then lead, in turn, to placement breakdowns when the foster parents' sexual orientation is "discovered" and the agency is ill-prepared to defend or explain the placing of a child in a gay or lesbian foster home.

A related implication for the agency is the role it is choosing to play in terms of both advocacy and

influence on public policy. In several other controversial policy-related matters, most notably in the area of rights and protection for staff and consumers affected by HIV infection and A.I.D.S., the practicum agency has chosen to play a leading advocacy role and, as a result, has had a significant influence on public policy. The well documented history on the issue of gay and lesbian rights in the province of Alberta clearly indicates that the present government is not going to play a leading role in bringing about change in this particular area of public policy. Consequently, the responsibility for changing public policy must fall to an even greater degree on social action groups and on agencies such as the practicum organization. Because the issue of gay and lesbian rights ultimately affects children and youth in our society, the agency may have to examine its current position on the issue and decide if it indeed wants to be in a position of facilitating and condoning discrimination against a particular minority, or if it wants to play a leading role in bringing about public policy change.

The third implication of the agency's decision to pursue a "make no mention" approach is the possibility of external legal challenges to the agency's policy and practice. The possibility of legal challenge may arise from either one of two divergent sources, or from both. On the one hand, the potential "discovery" of a foster parent's sexual orientation described above may lead to a court challenge to have the child or youth removed from the foster home. On the other hand, an openly gay or lesbian applicant who is turned down by the agency because of his or her sexual orientation may choose to launch a Charter of Rights and Freedoms case against the agency. Regardless of the outcome of any potential court challenges, the agency would ultimately be faced with both tremendous legal and social costs.

The final implication for the practicum organization is that of internal inconsistencies in agency policy and practice. Because the agency is unwilling to establish any explicit policy, either inclusive or exclusive, regarding gay and lesbian foster parents, practice in this area will continue to be idiosyncratic, depending upon individual beliefs and

levels of acceptance. Since official policies serve to represent the collective judgement and philosophy of the agency as a whole, and to guide practice within the agency, it is imperative that the organization establish an explicit and official policy with respect to gay and lesbian therapeutic foster parents. Finally, the agency will have to address the apparent inconsistency between the Board's governance policy which prohibits discrimination against employees and volunteers on the basis of sexual orientation, and the exclusion of sexual orientation in the existing human rights policy.

Recommendations

Based on the results of this practicum project, recommendations can be made both for future projects in this area and for the continued implementation of the solution strategy within the practicum organization. With respect to future projects in the area of supporting the inclusion of gay and lesbian foster parents, the following recommendations are made:

1. Engaging in an extensive educational and training process for agency members prior to proposing

changes to policy and practice.

2. Surveying agency consumers, including youth, biological parents, and social workers, in order to obtain a more accurate account of consumer attitudes regarding gay and lesbian foster parents.
3. Involving key members of the agency's funding body in the education, discussion, and formulation of policy regarding gay and lesbian foster parents.

With respect to the continued implementation of the solution strategy within the practicum organization, the following action is recommended:

1. Conducting education and training on the issue of homosexuality and human rights at all levels of the organization.
2. Using the Annual General Meeting as a forum to introduce, on a broader level, the issue of gay and lesbian foster parents.
3. Conducting a presentation and debate at the Board of Directors level, focusing on both the issue of human rights in general, and the issue of gay and lesbian foster parents in particular.

Dissemination

At this time, dissemination of the practicum results has occurred in only a very limited way. To date, the materials have been shared with two members of the Management Team and with the staff of the Edmonton-based Therapeutic Foster Care Program. Reaction to the results have been mixed. Although the management members indicated a satisfaction with the current results, they also stated their support for continued discussion and debate regarding the inclusion of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents. The staff of the Edmonton-based Therapeutic Foster Care Program, on the other hand, indicated disappointment with the results, and stated their full support for agency policy and practice which would explicitly support the inclusion of gays and lesbians as therapeutic foster parents.

Several methods of dissemination of this practicum and its results have been planned. Within the practicum organization, a written summary of the results will be shared with all members of the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee, the Personnel

Committee, and the Management Team at the next scheduled meetings of these groups. A complete copy of the practicum report will also be available to all agency staff through the organization's resource library at its head office location. In addition to these methods of dissemination, the material contained in the practicum report will be used as the basis for future agency training in the area of gay and lesbians rights and gay and lesbian foster parenting.

External dissemination of the practicum and its results will include: a written summary to be submitted to the news letter of the Foster Family-Based Treatment Association; a presentation to the local Therapeutic Foster Care Private Providers Group; and a presentation to the Alberta Association for Services to Children and Families. Finally, the practicum report will be summarized in the form of a journal article and submitted for possible publication in the Canadian Journal of Child and Youth Care.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Form

INTERVIEW FORM

Supervisors of Therapeutic Foster Care Programs

1. How many individuals/couples are currently contracted to provide therapeutic homes with your program?

2. How many of these individuals/couples are known to you to be gay or lesbian?

3. Within the past twelve months, how many individuals/couples have applied to become therapeutic foster parents with your program?

4. How many of these applicants have been known to you to be gay or lesbian?

5. Do agency policy and practice, with respect to the recruitment and selection of therapeutic foster parents, appear to:

   (a) support the <u>inclusion</u> of gays and lesbians

   (b) support the <u>exclusion</u> of gays and lesbians

   (c) remain <u>neutral</u> with respect to sexual orientation

APPENDIX B

Existing Recruitment and Selection Materials

VALUES:

1) WE ARE HERE TO SERVE KIDS. SERVICES ARE DEVELOPED FOR ONE CHILD AT A TIME BASED ON AN INDIVIDUAL CHILD'S NEEDS AND WRAPPED AROUND A CHILD AND HIS FAMILY.

2) OUR SUCCESS IS MEASURED BY THEIR SUCCESS.

3) WE WILL TAKE ON THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES AND WILL NOT GIVE UP ON KIDS (UNCONDITIONAL SERVICES).

4) WE ARE COMMITTED TO WORKING WITH BIOLOGICAL AND EXTENDED FAMILIES, AND THE NATURAL SUPPORT NETWORKS OF THE KIDS.

5) WE ARE COMMITTED TO THE PRINCIPLES OF PERMANENCY PLANNING.

6) WE WILL STRIVE FOR EXCELLENCE AND TOTAL QUALITY IN OUR SERVICES TO KIDS.

7) WE WILL ACTIVELY SUPPORT GROWTH IN AND LEADERSHIP FROM OUR STAFF IN THE CONTEXT OF STRONG TEAMWORK.

McMAN
YOUTH
SERVICES
ASSOCIATION

McMAN
YOUTH
SERVICES
ASSOCIATION

McMan Youth Services Association
11821 - 123rd Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5L 0G7

Therapeutic

Substitute

Family

Care

Program

McMAN YOUTH SERVICES ASSOCIATION

MISSION STATEMENT

McMan Youth Services is a not-for-profit, provincially chartered organization headquartered in Edmonton, Alberta. It has a constitution, by-laws and elected Board of Directors, who are ultimately responsible for all decisions, legal obligations and for the appointment of an Executive Director.

OUR MISSION

We assist disadvantaged children, youth and families across Alberta develop skills and support systems to function independently and responsibly in their community. We do this by providing counselling, support and residential services in the least intrusive manner.

- *WE WILL TREAT CLIENTS AND STAFF WITH RESPECT AND SENSITIVITY.*
- *WE WILL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CLIENTS AND THE COMMUNITY.*
- *WE WILL ADAPT SERVICES TO THE NEEDS OF EACH INDIVIDUAL.*
- *WE WILL USE HUMAN AND FINANCIAL RESOURCES IN AN EFFECTIVE AND RESPONSIBLE MANNER.*
- *WE WILL EXERCISE ADVOCACY AND LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM.*

OUR VALUES

- *QUALITY OF SERVICE*
- *EMPATHY*
- *RESPECT*
- *COMMITMENT*
- *INTEGRITY*

Therapeutic
Substitute
Family
Care
Program

PHILOSOPHY

McMan's Therapeutic Substitute Family-Care programs are based upon the fundamental belief in the value and importance of family-based care.

We believe that intervention in both potency and breadth will be achieved through well researched and developed intervention components combined with training, development and support of all personnel involved in intervention initiative. Substitute Family Care parents are regarded as professionals who are the primary agents of intervention and care for the children and adolescents we serve.

We believe that as the vast majority of children will have to live most of their lives in some form of family situation within the community, that, in line with a Social Learning perspective, intervention to effect change in their lives should take place in a setting which most closely approximates that to which the individual must adjust permanently. A healthy substitute-family setting is seen in this light, where the possibility exists for offering a high level of intervention intensity in the least restrictive, most normalized environment possible.

McMan believes in the need for the active involvement of biological families and extended family, as well as natural support networks as essential elements of any effective long-term intervention.

McMan believes in the active involvement of the child or adolescent in case decision making as a prerequisite for any long-term change.

T COPY AVAILABL

RECEIVING & ASSESSMENT

THERAPEUTIC

SUBSTITUTE FAMILY CARE

PROGRAM

MCMAN YOUTH SERVICES

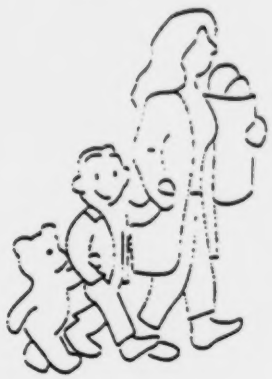
THERAPEUTIC SUBSTITUTE FAMILY PROGRAM

We are looking for families to provide a therapeutic setting for adolescents who have emotional and behavioural problems.

THE BENEFITS ARE VERY GOOD!

- THIS IS CAREER OPPORTUNITY THAT ALLOWS YOU TO PARENT YOUTH PROFESSIONALY IN YOUR OWN HOME
- YOU WILL WORK AS A MEMBER OF A PROFESSIONAL TEAM RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SERVICES TO YOUTH
- YOU WILL PARTICIPATE IN A COMPREHENSIVE AND ONGOING TRAINING PROGRAM
- YOU WILL RECEIVE CLOSE IN-HOME SUPPORT AND SUPERVISION FROM PROGRAM STAFF
- YOU WILL RECEIVE $11,000 ANNUALLY PER YOUTH (TAX EXEMPT) PLUS MONTHLY MAINTENANCE IN THE AMOUNT OF $375.00 PER YOUTH (TAX EXEMPT)-LIMIT TWO

To find out how you can make a difference in a youth's life, phone 424-4379.



McMan Youth Services
#54 9912-106 Street
Edmonton, AB
T5K 1C5

MCMAN YOUTH SERVICES

INITIAL CRITERIA FOR THERAPEUTIC PARENTS

1. Complete application and interview which demonstrates a parenting style compatible with McMan Youth Services.

2. Have a friend or relative apply if single. Secondary therapeutic parent must have the interest, time, transportation, and proximity to make the support realistic.

3. Be at least 21 years old.

4. Have a viable source of income (i.e. cannot include any form of public assistance) so that economic survival does not depend on income from McMan Youth Services.

5. Be tolerant of racial, sexual orientation, ethnic, religious, and educational backgrounds other than their own.

6. Be married or common-law 2 years, having no significant marital problems and able to work well together.

7. No more than 5 children living in the home, including the therapeutic parents' own children.

8. Be willing to receive and successfully complete 30-40 hours of training (evenings and Saturdays) prior to receiving a youth.

9. Be willing to work closely and cooperatively with a supervisor/support worker (who may be young and single) in learning to carry out therapeutic parenting procedures within prescribed guidelines. This will include scheduling in-home visits of one to three hour durations as frequently as once per week.

10. Be willing to keep prescribed, orderly, daily records of key events and behaviours.

11. Be stable, even-tempered, self-controlled and responsible with a good sense of humour.

12. Be generally enthusiastic, verbal, firm, consistent and adaptable.

13. Have adequate room to house a youth and to provide him/her with a private bedroom.

HOME OPERATOR APPLICATION FORM

Being a home operator to emotionally troubled youth is a rewarding but demanding task. In order for us to help you make a good decision, we need to know how your family functions.

The application is designed to gather information that will help us focus our visits on important issues and help you to secure information you need and want. It is a tool that will help you learn a bit more about support home operating and help us learn more about you and your family.

Each teen is different. Like all people, each teen has different needs, interests and problems. In addition, each family has different interests and capabilities. By gathering this information and finding out about your concerns and interests, we will be in a better position to make decisions that will result in the best arrangement for both the home operator and the teen.

Do your best to answer each question in a way that most accurately expresses your thoughts and feelings. Please note that some of the questions are rather personal. This is not because we want to pry into your personal life. Rather we must ask such questions because the placement of a child into a support home is a very serious matter for the youth and the home operators.

It is important that we learn of factors that may affect placement or influence the decision to place a specific youth into a particular family situation.

This section of the application will be answered individually by the prospective home operators father (mother).

Each home operator will complete a separate questionnaire.

FULL NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: (H)_____ (W) _____

DATE OF BIRTH: _____ AGE IN YEARS: _____

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: _____

BIRTH PLACE: _____

Marriage and Family

Marriage history (check one or explain)

___ I have never been married

___ now in first marriage

___ other: _____

___ now in second marriage

___ now in third marriage

Name of wife (Husband) _____

If you have been divorced or separated, please describe any circumstances that might effect a child being placed in your home eg. visitation of children, physical threats, unpredictable or unusual behaviour, etc.

_____

_____

_____

Please list all of your children (both living and dead), not just those in your current relationship. Please identify those who currently live with you.

Name	Living at Home	Not Living at Home	Birthdate

When listing the names of any children who have died give cause of death and age.

Name	Cause of Death	Age

List all other persons now living in your home, eg. grandparents, relatives, boarders, hired help, etc.

Name	Birthdate or Age	Relationship

Education and Occupation

Education (check highest level achieved)

___ Grade School

___ Some High School

___ Graduated High School

___ Other (explain) _____

_____

_____

___ Some College

___ College Degree

___ Graduate Degree

___ University Degree

If so, what subject:

_____

Present Occupation: _____

Give the name and address of your employer: _____

_____

Are you self-employed: [ ] yes [ ] no

Company or professional address: _____

_____

Which applies to your employment status:

___ Unemployed, looking for work

___ Homemaker (not employed outside the home)

___ Employed full time

___ Employed part-time

___ Unemployed because of disability

___ other (explain)

_____

_____

_____

If employed outside the home, approximately how many hours do you work each week: _____ hours.

Religious/Spiritual Beliefs

How would you describe you religious beliefs (check one or describe)

____ very strong ____ relatively weak

____ moderately strong ____ have no formal religious beliefs

____ or explain _____

_____

If you have reason to believe that your particular religious beliefs and/or personal values and beliefs will have a significant relationship to the type of care, training or discipline you will give a child in your care, please explain: _____

_____

_____

Hobbies, Interests, etc.

Please describe any special interests, hobbies, talents that you have (eg. music, hunting, ham radio, stamps, sewing, guitar, singing, etc.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

List any professional, social, or other organizations or groups to which you belong or that are important to you.

_____

_____

_____

List significant jobs you have held in the last 10 years:

Job	Date	Employer
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Do you drive a car?

[ ] yes [ ] no

Do you have a vehicle available for use as a home operator?
(In home operator respond)

[ ] yes [ ] no

Does your job require you to be away from home some nights?

_____ yes _____ no

Explain _____

_____

Health

Please describe any illness, handicap or medical problem that you may have. Explain how it would or would not affect your ability to care for a teen.

_____

_____

_____

In one or two sentences, try to explain that most important reasons you are interested in becoming a home operator.

_____

_____

_____

_____

In one or two sentences describe the main reasons why you might be reluctant or fearful about becoming a home operator.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Individual who have an interest in becoming home operators face a big decision and one that deserves a lot of serious thought and discussion. It is not unusual to have mixed feelings about it.

Below are some feelings described by previous home operators who have faced the same decision.

Place a check by those statements that come close to the feelings you have experienced as you thought about becoming a support home operator.

____ Basically I feel uncertain. One minute I say yes, the next I say no.

____ I wonder if I will be happier or more satisfied as a home operator than I am now. Maybe I should leave well enough alone.

____ What if I try and fail? What will other people think of me? I want to do a good job as a home operator; I don't know if I can.

____ Will other members of my family be happier or more satisfied if we become a support home family or will it create problems for them.

____ I wonder and worry a bit that becoming a home operator may have a bad effect on my marriage.

____ Will my friends, in-laws, or neighbours accept an emotionally troubled child, especially if the child causes problems.

____ What if I really come to love the teen and I have to give him/her up. I don't think I can handle it.

____ What if I find I cannot accept the teen? What if I become hateful toward the teen? What if I lose control and injure the teen?

____ What if I can't get along with the staff people? What do I do.

Please describe any other thoughts and feelings you might have about the support home operation that you would like to talk or ask about.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Below are some of the concerns reported by home operators. If the following, which would be of greatest concern. Place #1 by the one that concerns you most, #2 by your second choice and so on until all statements have numbers beside them.

____ Public misunderstandings about the behaviour of youth and lack of community acceptance.

____ Lack of needed services and programs in the community.

____ Youth's behaviour problems.

____ Frustration with the teens slow progress or relapse.

____ Problems or conflicts with the teens natural parents.

____ Conflicts with the program staff supervising the placement.

____ My inability to meet the teen's needs.

Which of the 4 of the following do you think are of greatest importance in being a home operator.

Place #1 in front of the most important, #2 for the second, etc. Place an X beside the two you feel would be least important.

____ Lots of love and attention

____ Guidance and discipline

____ Systematic training and teaching

____ Encouragement to try new things (taking risks)

____ Sympathy for problems

____ Interaction with normal children

____ Protection from physical danger

____ Religious training

____ Good neighbours

____ Good nutrition

____ Wholesome recreation

____ Freedom of self expression

If there are other factors you think are important but not found.in the list above, please describe here.
Which of the following comes closest to describing your personal experience with individuals (youth) who are emotionally troubled.

____ I have no personal experience with these types of teens.

____ My brother or sister was had emotional troubles.

____ Although I have known persons who had emotional troubles, I have little personal experience.

____ I have cared for children, on my own, who were in need of emotional and social support.

____ I have been a home operator or foster parent and have experience with this kind of teen.

-Describe:

If you were a home operator, how do you think you would feel about the teen's natural parents visiting the child in your home.

____ I would be opposed to such visits

____ I would favour such visits

____ Other (explain)

If you were a home operator how do you think you would feel about a social worker and/or program staff visiting your home on a regular basis to see how things are going.

____ As often as once per month would be O.K.

____ As often as twice per month would be O.K.

____ As often as once per week would be O.K.

____ As often as necessary would be O.K.

____ Other (explain)

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Have you had other teens stay at your home without their parents?

____ no ____ yes

If yes, what was the longest period of time any one child stayed with you.

____ one to three days

____ more than three days or up to one week

____ more than one week up to a month

____ more than a month

____ other (explain)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Partners do not always agree on who should do the tasks around the house. In your case how would you describe the degree of agreement on who does what around the house.

____ usually agree

____ agree more often than disagree

____ disagree more often than agree

____ usually disagree

Assuming you became a home operator your workload and your responsibilities would increase for the care of children. Given your present situation, which if the following would come closest to your personal views (check one)

____ Mother 90% responsibility Father 10% responsibility

____ Mother 75% responsibility Father 25% responsibility

____ Mother 50% responsibility Father 50% responsibility

____ Mother 25% responsibility Father 75% responsibility

____ Mother 10% responsibility Father 90% responsibility

Which of the following describe how you were disciplined as a child. Check all of those that describe your experience.

____ Talk things over

____ Loss of privileges

____ Occasional physical punishment

____ "Chewed out" verbally

____ Physical punishment

____ Other (describe)

_____

_____

_____

_____

How would you describe your childhood (check one)

____ Very happy ____ Sometimes troubled

____ Usually happy ____ Very difficult and troubled

How would you describe your parents marriage

____ Very happy ____ Sometimes troubled

____ Usually happy ____ Very difficult and troubled

Taking all things together, how would you describe your marriage?

____ Very happy

____ Happier than the average

____ Not as happy as the average

____ Very unhappy

We all get upset at times. We all handle stress in different ways. Below are some ways people deal with stress. Which comes closest to describing how you usually handle stress.

____ get out of the house or away from the source of stress

____ pray or engage in spiritual readings

____ talk to friends and neighbours

____ yell and scream for a while

____ take it out on others or punish others

____ talk to mother, father, brother or sisters

____ have a few drinks and relax

____ go off by yourself and be alone for a while

____ talk to minister or clergyman

____ talk to family doctor or other professional person

____ talk to husband/wife

____ talk to children

____ other (specify)

_____

_____

_____

_____

Being a home operator to an emotionally troubled youth is hard work and quite demanding. Often parents need help to do a good job. Which, if any, of the following types of help or assistance do you think you would need in order to do a good job as a home operator. Check all that apply.

____ no help would be needed

____ just someone to talk to once in a while

____ relief or "time off"

____ more help with housework

____ skilled professional guidance and advice

____ special training in how to care for the teen

____ moral support from other home operators

____ close supervision by a professional

____ sharing responsibility with my husband/wife

____ other service such as school programs, medical services

____ games/toys and other special equipment

____ other (if you can think of other types of help you would need or want please describe here) :

_____

_____

_____

_____

When this document is completed along with the others related to the home study please get it to me as quickly as possible.

MARRIAGE

How did you meet your husband/wife? What were your first impressions? What was the biggest adjustment you had to make after marriage?

What are the advantages and disadvantages to married life? What is the most difficult thing you have had to deal with as a couple?

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

What do you like best about your husband/wife? What aspects of your relationship with your husband/wife give you the most satisfaction?

How are feelings expressed in your family? How do you express anger, happiness, frustrations, etc? Can you confide in your husband/wife concerning personal matters?

Everyone must deal with stress in their day to day living. What kinds of things cause you stress, and how do you deal with it?

How would you describe yourself? What kind of a person do you see yourself to be? How do you think others see you?

What are the things you feel are your strengths and what are the areas you feel you could use help with?

NATURAL CHILDREN

Please describe each child that lives in your home. Please include their personality traits, interests, school progress, hobbies, likes, and dislikes.

What are your expectations of your children's responsibilities in the home and community? How do you help your children achieve their goals?

How do you discipline your children? What rules do you consider important for them? What rules are important to you?

How do you feel having a support home will affect your children?

APPENDIX C

Existing Agency Policies

Policy Number: 7.00.01
Subject: Status/Conditions of Employment
Issued on: January 1, 1988

POLICY

All employment decisions will be made solely on the basis of the candidate's ability to carry out the responsibilities of the position and the candidate's developmental potential. Employment decisions will be made without regard to sex, age, marital status, race, religion, place of birth, language or other characteristics which are not job related. Special considerations may be made providing they meet labour standards requirements.

PROCEDURES

1. Employment Categories

   a) Full-Time Employee

      A full-time employee is one who is employed for 22 hours or more per week.

   b) Part-Time Employee

      A part-time employee is one who works less than 22 hours per week.

   c) Temporary/Wage Employee

      A temporary employee is one who works as a replacement staff in cases of illness, leaves of absence, special projects, summer employment, etc. A temporary employee receives those benefits to which he is entitled under provincial legislation. A temporary employee will be paid by the hour.

   d) Contract Worker

      An individual who is contracted by McMan Youth Services to complete a project in a certain period of time for an agreed upon sum of money. A contract worker is not entitled to benefits with the agency and is required to make his/her own remittances to the Receiver General, and is responsible for his/her own statutory withholdings.

POLICY

McMan Youth Services Association considers itself bound by the terms of the Individuals Rights Protection Act and has made a commitment to honour the principles embodied in this legislation. McMan Youth Services Association will comply with any final decisions made pursuant to the terms of the Act.

PROCEDURES

1. McMan Youth Services Association will not directly or indirectly impede or discourage anyone who makes an honest complaint to the Human Rights Commission.

2. Nor will there be any adverse implications to anyone who makes an honest complaint.

3. As determination of the validity of any complaint is beyond the jurisdiction of McMan Youth Services Association, no disciplinary, corrective or remedial action will be taken by McMan Youth Services Association pending determination of the validity of the complaint, except as may be necessary to ensure ongoing functions are being performed.

RESPONSIBILITY

Management

MONITORED BY

Provincial Board of Directors

APPENDIX D

Questionnaire

MEMORANDUM

TO: **Selected Therapeutic Foster Parents**

FROM: **Danica Frazer**

DATE: **January 19, 1994**

RE: **Questionnaire on the Selection of Therapeutic Foster Parents**

Dear Therapeutic Parent,

As part of a project which I am completing in partial fulfilment of my master's degree at Nova University, I am requesting that a number of therapeutic parents within the agency complete the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire is meant to determine general attitudes toward the selection and approval as therapeutic foster parents, those individuals and couples, including gays and lesbians, who represent non-traditional family units.

For each section included on the questionnaire, indicate whether or not you believe that the particular individual(s) should be approved as a therapeutic foster parent(s). Include also a brief explanation (1-2 sentences) of your answer for each section. Please DO NOT put your name or the name of your program on the questionnaire.

Once you have completed the questionnaire, please return it to me in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. Questionnaires should be returned no later than January 31, 1994.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Danica Frazer

MEMORANDUM

TO: **Selected Agency Staff and Management Members**

FROM: **Danica Frazer**

DATE: **January 26, 1994**

RE: **Questionnaire on the Selection of Therapeutic Foster Parents**

Dear Staff/Management Member,

As part of a project which I am completing in partial fulfilment of my master's degree at Nova University, I am requesting that a number of staff and management members within the agency complete the attached questionnaire. The questionnaire is meant to determine general attitudes toward the selection and approval as therapeutic foster parents, those individuals and couples, including gays and lesbians, who represent non-traditional family units.

For each section included on the questionnaire, indicate whether or not you believe that the particular individual(s) should be approved as a therapeutic foster parent(s). Include also a brief explanation (1-2 sentences) of your answer for each section. Please DO NOT put your name or the name of your program on the questionnaire.

Once you have completed the questionnaire, please return it to me in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. Although it is short notice, it would be very much appreciated if the questionnaire could be returned to me by February 2.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Danica Frazer

QUESTIONNAIRE

As a therapeutic foster parent, do you believe that the following individuals or couples, who represent non-traditional family units, should, if they meet all other existing criteria, be approved as therapeutic foster parents?

(1) Single female parent. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(2) Single male parent. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(3) Single female with no children. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

QUESTIONNAIRE

As a staff or management member who does not work directly in therapeutic foster care, do you believe that the following individuals or couples, who represent non-traditional family units, should, if they meet all other existing criteria, be approved as therapeutic foster parents?

(1) Single female parent. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(2) Single male parent. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(3) Single female with no children. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(4) Single male with no children. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(5) Single lesbian woman. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(6) Single gay man. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(7) Common law couple/no children. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(8) Common law couple/with children. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(9) Lesbian couple/no children. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(10) Gay couple/no children. Yes _____ No _____

Please Explain:

(11) Lesbian couple with children. Yes _____ No _____

Please explain:

(12) Gay couple with children. Yes _____ No _____

Please explain:

APPENDIX E

Ten Week Implementation Plan

TEN WEEK IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

All tasks outlined in the plan will be carried out by the author of the practicum report.

Week One

1. Draft proposed amendments to the existing agency policy on employment status so that the policy includes an explicit reference to sexual orientation.
2. Draft proposed amendments to the existing agency policy on human rights so that the policy
   (a) explicitly acknowledges the exclusion of sexual orientation in current provincial legislation; and
   (b) explicitly states the agency's intention to provide equal rights protection to gays and lesbians, despite the provincial legislation.
3. Prepare the presentation to be made to the Personnel Committee on the proposed policy amendments.

Week Two

1. Deliver the presentation to the Personnel Committee.
2. Draft proposed operational statement which explicitly affirms that individuals, including gays and lesbians, who represent non-traditional family units, may be approved as therapeutic foster parents.

Week Three

1. Based on a review of Personnel Committee Meeting Minutes, recorded observations, and feedback on the proposed policy amendments, make any necessary changes to the policies.
2. Draft proposed changes to existing recruitment and selection materials so that all language and images which serve to implicitly exclude gays and lesbians are omitted and replaced with non-exclusionary language and images.
3. Prepare the presentation to be made to the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee.

Week Four

1. Deliver the presentation to the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee.

Week Five

1. Based on a review of minutes, recorded observations, and feedback from the Intra-agency Therapeutic Foster Care Committee Meeting, make any necessary changes to the proposed operational statement and the recruitment and selection materials.
2. Prepare the presentation to be made to the Management Team.

Week Six

1. Deliver the presentation to the Management Team.

Week Seven

1. Circulate the operational statement and the recruitment and selection materials to all Therapeutic Foster Care Program Supervisors within the practicum organization for inclusion in their operations manuals.

Week Eight

1. Based on a review of minutes, recorded observations, and feedback from the Management Meeting, prepare final copies of the amended policies.
2. Follow up with all Therapeutic Foster Care Supervisors to ensure that the operational statement and the recruitment and selection materials were received.

Week Nine

1. Prepare a memo to all agency staff members explaining the amendments to agency policies on employment status and human rights.
2. With the assistance of the agency Personnel Coordinator, circulate the amended policies and the memo to all Program Supervisors and Managers for inclusion in their Policies and Procedures Manuals.

Week Ten

1. Follow up with all supervisors and managers to ensure that policy amendments and memo were received.

APPENDIX F

Presentation Materials

SUPPORTING THE INCLUSION OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION AS A PROSCRIBED GROUNDS FOR DISCRIMINATION IN HUMAN RIGHTS AND EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

Problem Statement

Based upon the omission of sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for discrimination in current agency policies on employment status and human rights, it could be argued that the agency is implicitly excluding lesbian and gay individuals from employment with the agency. This implicit exclusion applies to permanent and temporary staff, as well as therapeutic foster parents.

Background and Contributing Factors

Gay men and lesbian women in our society have for so long been "viewed as sick, immoral, antisocial, and otherwise bad" (Herek, 1984). The term commonly used to describe this view of gay men and lesbian women is "homophobia." Coined by George Wienberg in 1972, the term homophobia can be described as any belief system which supports negative myths and stereotypes about homosexual people. Morin and Garfinkle (1978) more specifically define homophobia as follows:

> (a) belief systems which hold that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is justifiable; (b) the use of language or slang, e.g., "queer," which is offensive to gay people; and/or (c) any belief system which does not value homosexual life styles equally with heterosexual life styles.

Taking the definition one step further, Voeller (1980) characterizes homophobia as a human rights issue, noting that the methods of oppression and persecution of gays and lesbians are identical to those used on other minority groups. Supporting this

view of homophobia as a human rights issue, Marmor (1980) argues that most gay men and lesbian women "ask only to be accepted as human beings and allowed to live their lives free of persecution or discrimination".

Freedman (1978) points out that homosexuality, in and of itself, is not a sickness, but that homophobia is a "severe disturbance," damaging both homosexuals and heterosexuals. Similarly, Marmor (1980) states that homophobia "is a mental health issue of the first magnitude". Due to the pervasive nature of homophobia, lesbian women and gay men are discriminated against in the areas of employment, military service, housing, licensing, and public accommodations. With respect to employment in particular, many lesbian and gay applicants, fearing discrimination, choose to hide their sexual orientation. As argued by Terry (1992):

> Very few lesbians or gays will believe that their sexual orientation can be anything but a barrier. The fact is that qualifications of the individual should be the deciding factor. Reality tells us that qualifications would not be the deciding factor if sexual orientation were known.

Similarly, Hidalgo (1992) argues that:

> At least 10 percent (10%) of the total population is lesbian or gay oriented....If the homosexual population is invisible in the agency, it could mean that the agency is sending an explicit or implicit message: "lesbians and gays need not to apply" and/or "make sure lesbian or gay identity remains in the closet to avoid penalties and discrimination."

Although discrimination on other grounds (e.g., ethnic origin,

age, sex) is currently prohibited under provincial and federal legislation, sexual orientation remains excluded from this legislation. At the present time, the preamble to Alberta's Individual's Rights Protection Act reads, in part, as follows:

> WHEREAS recognition of the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all persons is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world; and
>
> WHEREAS it is recognized in Alberta as a fundamental principle and as a matter of public policy that all persons are equal in dignity and rights without regard to race, religious beliefs, colour, gender, physical disability, mental disability, age, ancestry or place of origin.

Similarly, Section 15.(1) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states that:

> Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Because being an identified lesbian woman or a gay man means that "basic constitutional rights and security needs are threatened every day...programs, policies, and practices which treat qualified individuals without bias should be developed, supported and promoted" (Terry, 1990). Hidalgo (1992) argues that it is necessary to make "changes and/or modifications in existing agency programs/policies that will result in making agency services and practices sensitive and responsive to lesbian women and gay men -

staff and clients". Even with legislative sanction and enforcement, equal opportunity practices are difficult. Therefore, in the absence of legislative sanction and enforcement, "as in the case of gays and lesbians, equal opportunity practices are dependent upon agency policies, administrative directions, and administrative attitudes" (Terry, 1992).

Although many politicians, judges, and administrators "continue to argue that 'the time is not right' for protecting the gay and lesbian minority, and that much more public education is required....this argument itself is proof that protection is an immediate necessity" (Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario, 1990). As demonstrated by the experience of other minorities, protection by means of comprehensive human rights policies "serves as an effective means of educating the public as well as protecting minorities from the acts of a prejudice few" (Coalition for Gay Rights in Ontario, 1990).

Gays and Lesbians as Foster Parents

A review of the current literature on gay and lesbian parenting indicates that a significant number of gays and lesbians have, for a number of years, fulfilled a foster parenting role in both Canada and the United States. However, most prospective lesbian and gay foster parents have chosen to remain invisible and to hide their sexual orientation. Openly lesbian and gay men who apply to become foster parents, if considered at all, "are commonly investigated more extensively than most other people" (Ricketts & Achtenberg, 1987, p. 104).

While the "suitability for foster parenting generally has been

based on such criteria as the prospective foster parents' ability to provide a warm, stable, nurturing environment for a child," this is not the case for gay and lesbian applicants. Despite strong evidence showing that gays and lesbians can be capable parents, and that the children of gays and lesbians are no different than other children, gays and lesbians continue to be excluded, either implicitly or explicitly from foster parenting.

Several human service organizations have adopted policy statements opposing the discrimination of foster parents based on sexual orientation. For example, the American Psychological Association has adopted a resolution which states that "the sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation of natural or prospective foster parents should not be the sole or primary variable considered in child custody or placement cases" (Chilman et al., 1988, p. 27). Similarly, the American Psychiatric Association, in its 1986 Position Statement on Discrimination in Selection of Foster Parents, states that "single factors (e.g., being a single parent, homosexual, or elderly) should not necessarily or automatically rule out the selection of a potential foster parent" (p. 1506).

Proposed Solution

In order to effectively address the implicit exclusion, within the agency, of gay and lesbian employees and therapeutic foster parents, it is proposed that:

(1) Policy Number 7.00.01, Status/Conditions of Employment be amended so that the policy includes an explicit reference to sexual orientation as a proscribed grounds for

discrimination; and that

(2) Policy Number 7.30.18, Human Rights, be amended so that the policy: (a) explicitly acknowledges the omission of sexual orientation in Alberta's Individual's Rights Protection Act; and (b) explicitly states the agency's commitment to afford equal rights and protection to gays and lesbians despite this omission in the Act.

SUGGESTED READINGS

American Psychiatric Association. (1986). Position statement on discrimination in selection of foster parents. American Journal of Psychiatry, 143(11), 1506.

Bozett, F. (Ed.). (1987). Gay and lesbian parents. New York: Praeger Press.

Gramick, J. (1983). Homophobia: A new challenge. Social Work, March-April 1983, 137-141.

Marcus, E. (1992). Making history: The struggle for gay and lesbian equal rights. New York: HarperCollins Publishers.

Sands, A. (Producer). (1987). We are family: Parenting and foster parenting in gay families. [Videotape]. New York: Filmakers Library.

Woodman, N. (Ed.). (1992). Lesbian and gay life styles: A guide for counselling and education. New York: Irvington Publishers.

APPENDIX G

Proposed Policy Amendments

POLICY (PROPOSED)

All employment decisions will be made solely on the basis of the candidate's ability to carry out the responsibilities of the position and the candidate's developmental potential. Employment decisions will be made without regard to gender, age, marital status, ethnic origin, colour, religion, place of birth, language, **sexual orientation**, or other characteristics which are not job related.

PROCEDURES

1. Employment Categories

a) Full-Time Employees

A full-time employee is one who is employed for 22 hours or more per week.

b) Part-Time Employees

A part-time employee is one who works less than 22 hours per week.

c) Temporary/Wage Employees

A temporary employee is one who works as a replacement staff in cases of illness, leaves of absence, special projects, summer employment, etc. A temporary employee receives those benefits to which he is entitled under provincial legislation. A temporary employee will be paid by the hour.

d) Contract Worker

An individual who is contracted by McMan Youth Services to complete a project in a certain period of time for an agreed upon sum of money. A contract worker is not entitled to benefits with the agency and is required to make his/her own remittances to the Receiver General, and is responsible for his/her own statutory withholdings.

POLICY (PROPOSED)

[The agency] considers itself bound by the terms of the Individual's Rights Protection Act and has made a commitment to honour the principles embodied in this legislation. **At the same time, however, [the agency] acknowledges that the Act excludes marital status and sexual orientation as proscribed grounds for discrimination. Despite these omissions in the Act, [the agency] has made a commitment to prohibit any discrimination of individuals or groups on the grounds of their marital status or sexual orientation.**

PROCEDURES

1. [The agency] will not directly or indirectly impede or discourage anyone who makes an honest complaint to the Human Rights Commission.

2. Nor will there be any adverse implications to anyone who makes an honest complaint.

3. As determination of the validity of any complaint is beyond the jurisdiction of [the agency], no disciplinary, corrective or remedial action will be taken by [the agency] pending determination of the validity of the complaint, except as may be necessary to ensure ongoing functions are being performed.

APPENDIX H

Proposed Operational Statement and

Amended Recruitment and Selection Materials

Operations Manual
Procedure Number: 600.03
Subject: **Non-Discrimination in the Selection of Therapeutic Parents**

PROCEDURE (PROPOSED)

The selection of therapeutic parents will be based solely upon the applicants' ability to carry out the responsibilities of the position, and to provide a stable, caring and therapeutic environment according to the criteria outlined in Policy Number 600.02.

METHODS

1. Selection decisions will be made without regard to gender, ethnic origin, religion, marital status, or source and level of income.

2. The sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation of prospective therapeutic foster parents will not be the sole or primary variable considered in selection decisions.

3. Individuals, including common-law couples, single parents, and gays and lesbians, who represent non-traditional family units and who meet all other existing criteria, may be selected and approved as therapeutic parents.

Operations Manual
Procedure Number: 600.01
Subject: Recruitment

PROCEDURE

All Therapeutic Foster Care Programs will engage in ongoing recruitment strategies to obtain viable therapeutic parents for their respective programs.

METHODS

1. All programs will place advertisements within their community on an ongoing basis which will specify:

   a) the main principles and features of the program
   b) the program contact person
   c) the program phone number
   d) any remuneration which will be available to those successful applicants

2. All Therapeutic Foster Care Programs will compile information packages on their particular program which may be given to interested applicants.

3. All Therapeutic Foster Care Programs will conduct information sharing sessions with prospective therapeutic parents, district offices, allied professionals,etc., on an ongoing basis.

4. All available media sources should be utilized, i.e., flyer distribution, radio, cable television, volunteer centres,etc.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT:

5. **No advertisements, brochures, or other materials used in the recruitment of therapeutic foster parents will contain language or images which may serve to exclude non-traditional family forms.**

INITIAL CRITERIA FOR THERAPEUTIC FOSTER PARENTS

1. Complete an application and interview which demonstrate a parenting style compatible with the agency.

2. Have a friend or relative apply if single. Secondary therapeutic parent must have the interest, time, transportation, and proximity to make the support realistic.

3. Be at least 21 years old.

4. Be tolerant of racial, sexual orientation, ethnic, religious, and educational backgrounds other than your own.

5. ***If in a relationship, have no significant relationship problems, and able to work well with spouse/partner.***

6. No more than five children living in the home, including your own children.

7. Be willing to receive and successfully complete 30-40 hours of pre-service training (evenings and Saturdays) prior to receiving a youth.

8. Be willing to work closely and cooperatively with a supervisor/support worker in learning to carry out therapeutic parenting procedures within prescribed guidelines. This will include scheduling in-home visits of one to three hour durations as frequently as once per week.

9. Be willing to keep prescribed, orderly, daily records of key events and behaviours.

10. Be stable, even-tempered, self-controlled, and responsible, with a good sense of humour.

11. Be generally enthusiastic, verbal, firm, consistent, and adaptable.

12. Have adequate room to house a youth and to provide him/her with a private bedroom.

HOME ASSESSMENT SELF-REPORT
For Therapeutic Parents

WHY IS A DETAILED ASSESSMENT REQUIRED?

Being a therapeutic parent is a rewarding but demanding task. In order for us to help you make a good decision, we need to know how your family functions. This self-report is designed to gather information that will help us focus our in-home interviews on important issues, and help you to secure the information that you need and want. It is a tool that will help you learn a bit more about therapeutic parenting, and that will help us learn more about you and your family.

WHY USE THIS SELF-REPORT?

This self-report allows you to participate fully in the assessment of your family. Much of the assessment process is for your own self-discovery. You need to look at how your strengths and interests might fit with the needs of a child entering your home. As well, much of therapeutic parenting is about learning, team work and skill development. The assessment process helps you determine whether these activities fit with your lifestyle.

WHAT ELSE GOES INTO THE ASSESSMENT?

In addition to your self-report, program staff will complete an assessment of your family. Personal references are obtained and everyone in your home is interviewed. The self-report gives program staff a starting point on which to base interviews. Program staff will visit your home as often as needed to make an accurate assessment and a recommendation regarding approval.

HOW TO COMPLETE THE SELF-REPORT

1. Each adult in your home must complete both the Application Form and the Autobiography.

2. It is important to cover all topics listed in the Application Form and the Autobiography. You may add any additional information that you think may be useful.

3. Do your best to answer each question in a way that most accurately expresses your thoughts and feelings. If you do not understand a question or find it hard to write about, please call the program to discuss the question.

APPLICATION FORM

A. APPLICANT INFORMATION

FULL NAME:_____

ADDRESS:_____

PHONE NUMBER: (H)_____ (W)_____

DATE OF BIRTH:_____ AGE IN YEARS:_____

SOCIAL INSURANCE NUMBER:_____

B. FAMILY AND ***RELATIONSHIP*** INFORMATION

1. Present ***Relationship*** (please check one)

_____ no current ***spouse/partner***

_____ now in first marriage

_____ now in second marriage

_____ now in third marriage

_____ legal common-law

_____ ***cohabitating with partner***

_____ other (please specify)

_____

2. Name of current ***spouse/partner*** (if applicable)

_____

3. If you have been divorced or separated, please describe any circumstances that might affect a child being placed in your home (e.g., visitation of children, physical threats, unpredictable or unusual behaviour of previous ***spouse or partner***.

_____

_____

_____

4. Please list any children that you have (both living and dead) from current and previous ***relationships***.

Name	Birthdate	Living at Home Yes	No
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

5. If listing any children who have died, please give cause of death and age.

Name	Cause of Death	Age
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

6. List all other persons currently living in your home (e.g. grandparents, relatives, boarders, hired help, etc.).

Name	Relationship	Age
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

7. ***Spouses/partners*** do not always agree on who should do the tasks around the home. In your current situation, how would you describe the degree of agreement on who does what around the home?

_____ usually agree

_____ agree more often than disagree

_____ disagree more often than agree

_____ usually disagree

8. Given your present situation, which of the following most closely reflects the sharing of responsibilities in the home?

_____ Myself 90%	_____ ***Spouse/Partner*** 10%
_____ Myself 75%	_____ ***Spouse/Partner*** 25%
_____ Myself 50%	_____ ***Spouse/Partner*** 50%
_____ Myself 25%	_____ ***Spouse/Partner*** 75%
_____ Myself 10%	_____ ***Spouse/Partner*** 90%

9. How would you describe your relationship with your current ***spouse/partner?***

_____ Very happy	_____ Less happy than the average
_____ Happier than the average	_____ Very unhappy

10. How would you describe your parents' ***relationship***?

_____ Very happy	_____ Sometimes troubled
_____ Usually happy	_____ Very troubled

11. How would you describe your childhood?

_____ Very happy	_____ Sometimes troubled
_____ Usually happy	_____ Very troubled

12. Check all of the following which describe how you were disciplined as a child.

_____ Talk things over

_____ Loss of privileges

_____ Occasional physical punishment

_____ Verbal lectures

_____ Physical punishment

_____ Other (please describe)

_____

_____

_____

_____

C. EDUCATION AND OCCUPATION

1. What is the highest level of education that you have achieved?

_____

2. If you hold either a college diploma or a university degree, in what area of study is the diploma/degree?

_____

3. What is your current employment status?

_____ Unemployed and looking for work

_____ Unemployed due to disability

_____ Not employed outside the home

_____ Employed full time outside the home

_____ Employed part time outside the home

_____ Other (please explain)

_____

4. If employed outside the home

(a) What is the name and address of your employer?

_____

(b) What is your current occupation?

_____

(c) How many hours do you work each week? _____

(d) Does your job require you to be out of town or away from home some nights? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, how often and for how long are you away?

_____

5. If self- employed, please give the name of your company and professional address.

_____

_____

6. List significant jobs you have held in the last 10 years.

Job/Position	Employer	Dates
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

D. **HEALTH**

Please describe any illness, disability, or medical problem that you have. Explain how any of these would or would not affect your ability to care for a child or teen.

_____

_____

_____

E. RELIGIOUS/SPIRITUAL BELIEFS

1. How would you describe your religious beliefs?

_____ very strong _____ relatively weak

_____ moderately strong _____ no formal beliefs

_____ other (please explain) _____

_____

2. If you have reason to believe that your particular religious/spiritual beliefs will have a significant impact on the type of care, training, or discipline you would give to a child, please explain.

_____

_____

_____

F. HOBBIES AND INTERESTS

1. Please describe any special interests, hobbies, talents that you have.

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. List any professional, social, or other organizations or groups to which you belong or which are important to you.

_____

_____

_____

_____

G. SELF-EVALUATION

1. In a few sentences, please explain why you want to become a therapeutic parent.

2. In a few sentences, describe why you might be reluctant or fearful about becoming a therapeutic parent.

3. Place a check by any of the statements below which come close to any the feelings you may be experiencing as you consider becoming a therapeutic parent.

_____ Basically I feel uncertain. One minute I say yes, and the next minute I say no.

_____ I wonder if I will be happier or more satisfied as a therapeutic parent than I am now? Maybe I should leave well enough alone.

_____ What if I try and fail? What will other people think of me? I want to do a good job as a therapeutic parent. I don't know if I can.

_____ Will other members of my family be happier or more satisfied if I become a therapeutic parent, or will it create problems for them?

_____ I wonder and worry a bit that becoming a therapeutic parents may have a bad effect on my marriage/relationship.

_____ Will my friends or neighbours accept an emotionally troubled child, especially if the child causes problems?

_____ What if I really come to love the child and I have to give him/her up? I don't think I can handle that.

_____ What if I find I cannot accept the child? What if I become hateful toward the child? What if I lose control and injure the child?

_____ What if I can't get along with the program staff? What do I do.?

4. Please describe any other thoughts or feelings you might have about becoming a therapeutic parent and that you might like to talk or ask about.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. Below are some concerns that have been expressed by therapeutic parents. Place #1 by the one that would concern you the most, #2 by your second choice, and so on until all of the statements are numbered.

_____ Public misunderstanding about the behaviour of youth and lack of community acceptance.

_____ Lack of needed services and programs in the community.

_____ Youth's behaviour problems.

_____ Frustration with the child's slow progress or relapse.

_____ Problems or conflicts with the child's natural parents.

_____ Conflicts with the program staff supervising the placement.

_____ My inability to meet the child's needs.

6. Which four of the items listed below do you think are of greatest importance in being a therapeutic parent? Place #1 in front of the most important, #2 for the second, etc. Place an X beside the two you feel would be the least important.

_____ Lots of love and attention

_____ Guidance and discipline

_____ Systematic training and teaching

_____ Encouragement to try new things/take risks

_____ Sympathy for problems

_____ Interaction with normal children

_____ Protection from physical danger

_____ Religious training

_____ Good neighbours

_____ Good nutrition

_____ Wholesome recreation

_____ Freedom of self expression

7. If there are other factors which you think are important but not found in the list above, please describe here.

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. Which of the following statements come closest to describing your personal experience with youth who are emotionally troubled?

_____ I have no personal experience with these type of youth.

_____ My brother/sister had emotional troubles.

_____ I have known youth with emotional troubles, but I have little personal experience.

_____ I have cared for children/youth, on my own, who were in need of emotional support.

_____ I have been a foster parent and have had experience with this type of youth.

9. Have you had any children/youth stay at your home without their parents? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, what was the longest period of time any one child stayed with you?

_____ one to three days

_____ more than three days or up to one week

_____ more than one week or up to a month

_____ more than one month

_____ other (please explain)

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. If you were a therapeutic parent, how do you think you would feel about the child's natural parents visiting your home?

_____ I would be opposed to such visits.

_____ I would favour such visits.

_____ Other (please explain)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. If you were a therapeutic parent, how do you think you would feel about a social worker and/or program staff visiting your home on a regular basis?

_____ Once a month would be acceptable.

_____ Twice per month would be acceptable.

_____ Once per week would be acceptable.

_____ As often as needed would be acceptable.

_____ Other (please explain)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. Being a therapeutic parent to an emotionally troubled child is hard work and is very demanding. Often parents need help to do a good job. Which of the following types of help or assistance do you think you would need in order to do a good job as a therapeutic parent? Check all that apply.

_____ no help would be needed

_____ just someone to talk to once in a while

_____ relief or "time off"

_____ more help with housework

_____ skilled professional guidance and advice

_____ special training in how to care for the child

_____ moral support from other therapeutic parents

_____ close supervision by a professional

_____ sharing responsibility with my ***spouse/partner***

_____ other services such as school programs

_____ games/toys and other special equipment

_____ other (please describe)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. Below are some ways people deal with stress. Which of these comes closest to describing the way in which you usually handle stress?

_____ get away from the source of stress

_____ pray or engage in spiritual readings

_____ talk to friends

_____ yell and scream for awhile

_____ take it out on others or punish others

_____ talk to family members

_____ have a few drinks and relax

_____ talk to religious or spiritual leader

_____ talk to doctor or other professional person

_____ talk to *spouse/partner*

_____ talk to children

_____ other (please specify)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

APPLICANT NAME:_____ DATE:_____

A. CHILDHOOD

Please comment on your early life, including your parents, their personalities, likes and dislikes, and the things they thought were important in raising a family. What rules did you have as a child? How frequently do you see your parents and siblings now?

B. ***RELATIONSHIP***

How did you meet your current ***spouse/partner***? What were your first impressions? What is the biggest adjustment you have had to make in living with your ***spouse/partner***?

What are the advantages and the disadvantages to living with a ***spouse/partner***? What is the most difficult thing you have had to deal with as a couple?

What do you like best about your ***spouse/partner***? What aspects of your ***relationship*** with your ***spouse/partner*** give you the most satisfaction?

How are feelings expressed in your family? How do you express anger, happiness, frustration, etc? Can you confide in your ***spouse/partner*** concerning personal matters?

C. NATURAL CHILDREN

Please describe each of your children currently living in your home. Please include their personality traits,interests, school progress, hobbies, likes and dislikes.

What are your expectations of your children's responsibilities in the home and in the community? How do you help your children achieve their goals?

How do you discipline your children? What rules to you consider important for them? What rules are important to you?

How do you feel that being a therapeutic home will affect your children?

D. PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

Everyone must deal with stress in their day to day living. What kinds of things cause you stress, and how do you deal with stress?

How would you describe yourself? What kind of person do you see yourself to be? How do you think others see you?

APPENDIX I

Meeting Minutes

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 23, 1994

IN ATTENDANCE:	Donna Topping	Pam Stewart
	Danica Frazer	Karin Matthiessen
	Hugh Nicholson	Linda Rivard
	Tammy Ganske	Cathy Kimberly
	Richard Curliss	
ABSENT:	Louise Millen	
	Sherri McAllister	
CHAIRPERSON:	Donna Topping	

1.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved with the issue of confidentiality on the Bulletin Board System being deleted, as it was agreed that it was a management issue.

2.0 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes from the November 19, 1993 meeting were approved.

3.0 OLD BUSINESS

3.1 Identification Cards

Donna Topping explained that the results of her survey indicated a lack of need for identification cards, along with a concern regarding the quality of the cards issued to date. Donna also presented possible options for producing higher quality cards. Committee members expressed concern over the results of the survey, stating that identification cards were issued because staff had indicated a significant need for them. It was decided that a more thorough survey needed to be conducted, using a questionnaire which would be filled out by all staff members. Donna and Danica will develop the questionnaire and distribute to all programs by April 15. Results of the questionnaire will be forwarded to Danica by May 1, 1994.

3.2 Exit Interview Questionnaire

Karin reviewed the feedback she received from the Board Member regarding the exit questionnaire. No significant concerns were expressed by the Board Member.

It was also decided that issues raised on exit questionnaires should continue to be reviewed by Personnel Committee, but that names should not be attached to the issues. Any issues which are not personnel issues will be referred by the committee to the management team. Karin and Sherri will review issues raised on the current exit questionnaires and bring the issues to the next Personnel Committee meeting.

Regarding the decision at the last meeting to use the exit interview on an annual basis, it was decided that the current questionnaire should remain as an exit questionnaire only and that a separate questionnaire/appraisal should be developed for use as an "Annual Agency Evaluation" by staff. This annual evaluation would be completed by all staff every November, and would be sent out and collected by the Personnel Coordinator.

Danica will develop a draft of the Annual Agency Evaluation and fax to all Committee members and Board Members by April 30, 1994.

4.0 NEW BUSINESS

4.1 New Administration Representative

Hugh introduced Linda Rivard as the new admin representative, explaining that she will be replacing Donna Topping. Donna will remain on the Personnel Committee as a standing member, given her expanded role as Personnel Coordinator and her level of expertise in personnel and related issues.

4.2 Election of Members

As June is the end of the Committee's term, the election of new members was discussed. Issues regarding the election and the representation of staff included:

a) lack of adequate representation/involvement from the northern region

Pam will approach the northern programs and suggest that they have a front line staff member sit on the committee

b) lack of adequate representation for CISP

It was agreed that CISP would have both a front line and a supervisor representative elected to the committee

All other representation is to remain as is, with Camrose being represented by the Central Region representative

Richard will coordinate the elections for all regions except CISP, which will be coordinated by Tammy. A memo regarding the elections and calling for nominations will be sent out to all programs by April 15, 1994.

4.3 Personnel Policies of the Board of Directors

Hugh explained that the Board has developed drafts of what are called Governance Policies. Copies of the draft policies were distributed to all committee members. These policies cover areas such as finance and personnel and ensure that agency policy and practice promote, for example, a fair wage system and human rights. Any revisions to these policies should be completed within the next week. Hugh will bring the final drafts of the policies to the next meeting.

4.4 Proposed Amendments to Policies

7.00.01 Status/Conditions of Employment

It was proposed that sexual orientation be included in this policy as a proscribed grounds for discrimination.

The inclusion of sexual orientation in the policy was unanimously approved.

7.30.18 Human Rights

It was proposed that this policy be amended to explicitly acknowledge the exclusion of sexual orientation and marital status as proscribed grounds for discrimination in Alberta's Individual's Rights Protection Act, and to explicitly state the agency's intention to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and marital status.

The proposed amendment was unanimously approved.

7.30.02 Hours of Work and Overtime

It was proposed that this policy be amended to include the clause "with 1/2 hour unpaid lunch" for clerical staff and the clause "with 1/2 hour paid working lunch" for other full time staff.

The amendments were unanimously approved.

7.30.15 Statutory Holidays

It was proposed that this policy be amended to omit the clause requiring a salaried employee to work 30 days within the last twelve months in order to be paid for a statutory holiday. Some arguments were made against the amendment, stating that the present policy could result in some cost savings for programs. However, it was then agreed that any savings would be minimal and insignificant.

The proposed amendment was unanimously approved.

7.30.10 Vacations

Three amendments were proposed as follows:

a) Changing vacation days from 15 to 10 for the first two years of employment (effective for new employees). The rationale for this amendment was that it would save money for programs and provide incentive for employees in their third year with the agency.

   Arguments were made against the amendment stating that due to low staff turn over, any savings would be minimal; that in light of low salaries and the expectations of new employees (self studies, etc.) 15 vacation days was not seen to be excessive.

   The proposed amendment was unanimously opposed.

b) Not allowing first year employees to convert remaining sick days into vacation days.

   Some arguments were made against the amendment stating that it may result in employees taking all of their sick days in a year. Again, it was argued that any savings would be minimal.

   The proposed amendment was unanimously opposed.

c) Increase the number of allowable borrowed vacation days from 5 to 10.

Although there was general agreement with this amendment, it was suggested that a better solution would be to change the vacation cycle to August to September, rather than April to March. Changing the cycle would allow employees to accumulate vacation days to be taken during the summer, and would eliminate the current problem of employees having to clear their vacation days in March.

The proposed amendment was opposed with voting as follows:

2 members in favour

7 members opposed based upon the acceptance of the proposal to change the vacation cycle.

It was agreed that Hugh would check into the possibility of having the vacation cycle changed.

7.30.16 Agency Sick Leave Entitlement

It was proposed that a clause be added which would allow for staff to take time to make arrangements for immediate family who are ill. It was proposed that staff be allowed 2 days at any given time, up to a maximum of 6 days per year. While there was general agreement with the proposed amendment, it was suggested that it should be included under Policy Number 7.30.11.

The proposed amendment to Policy Number 7.30.11 was unanimously approved.

7.50.02 Discipline (Non-Probationary Staff)

It was proposed that the section outlining the procedure for "an incident that may require disciplinary action" be omitted from the policy as there are serious problems (legal risk) with this section of the policy. Concerns were expressed regarding the removal of this section of the policy without replacing it with a new policy and with giving approval to an amended policy that committee members had not yet seen.

The proposal to change the policy was neither voted on nor approved. However, Hugh stated that he would write an interim policy which would be put in place in the near future. Hugh will then bring an amended policy to the next committee meeting for approval.

4.5 Regional Representatives Reports

It was brought to the committee's attention that some staff have expressed concerns about not feeling represented by the committee and not being aware of what was going on with the committee. The purpose of the committee was reviewed and the importance of representation was stressed. All members agreed to make more of a commitment to keep their constituents informed and to seek their input.

NEXT MEETING: FRIDAY JUNE 3, 1994

10:00 A.M.

CALGARY OFFICE

TREATMENT FOSTER CARE INTRA-AGENCY MEETING
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 10, 1994

PRESENT: Janet Fizell, Steve Brown, Shelley Heartwell, Roxanne Droppo, Louise Millen, Gayle Pickrell, Jackie Kerr, Danica Frazer, Anton Smith

ABSENT: Sherilyn Varro

CHAIRPERSON: Shelley Heartwell

1.0 APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved with the addition of the following items:

a) skill fees for therapeutic parents
b) FFTA Conference/Update

2.0 PURPOSE OF MEETINGS/FUTURE GOALS AND VISION

It was agreed that the meetings were important and that they should continue to take place, particularly over the next year in preparation for peer review and accreditation.

It was agreed that the primary purpose of the meetings would be to focus on accreditation. It was also agreed that we would meet as a full group four times during the next year (end of September, end of November, January, and March).

Roxanne spoke to the issue of meetings being continually cancelled and/or rescheduled. In addition to the scheduling noted above, it was agreed that a regular chairperson should be appointed and given the responsibility of planning and scheduling all meetings. It was agreed that Shelley Heartwell would be responsible for chairing meetings and that Danica Frazer would be responsible for all minute taking.

3.0 STANDARDS/POLICIES

Shelley and Steve introduced this section explaining that the agency may go through the accreditation process in March 1995.

3.1 Review of Standards

Shelley led a review of the AASCF Standards for Treatment Foster Care. Concerns were raised regarding standard S.2.12 which requires a masters level clinician to provide 0.2 FTE of supervision and consultation. Concerns were expressed regarding both the cost and the necessity of this level of consultation. It was agreed that these concerns would be raised at the AASCF meeting in Red Deer on May 19.

3.2 Policies to Support Standards

It was agreed that policies needed to be reviewed/ developed to support the standards. Responsibility for reviewing/developing policies will be as follows:

Danica and Roxanne: Section 2 and Section 3

Louise and Sherilyn: Section 1 and Section 4

Policies are to be written according to the attached format and will be compiled in an Operations Manual.

Policies are to be put on disc and sent to Danica by August 15. Danica will then compile the information and arrange to have it uploaded on to the BBS system by August 19.

A phone conference will then be set up for Tuesday, August 30 at 10:00 a.m. to discuss the policies. Danica to arrange the phone conference.

The group will then meet in Calgary on Monday, September 12 at 11:00 a.m. to review and finalize the policies. Self study manuals will then be completed during the following two week period.

4.0 PRESENTATION ON RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICIES/PRACTICES

4.1 Proposed Operational Statement

Danica proposed to the group that the Treatment Foster Care Operations Manual contain a policy/operational statement on recruitment/selection explicitly stating that non-traditional families, including gays and lesbians, may be accepted as therapeutic parents if they meet all other existing criteria.

While the group supported the proposal in principle, concerns were raised regarding the current political climate and the government's position on granting any type of rights to gays and lesbians. As well, concerns were raised regarding a potential lack of support from the Board of Directors for this type of policy.

It was agreed that Danica should meet with the Executive Director to discuss the proposed operational statement, and then prepare a presentation to be made to the Board of Directors.

4.2 Proposed Changes to Recruitment Materials

Danica explained that current recruitment ads and materials could be seen as reflecting only a traditional family form and thus inadvertently excluding/dissuading other individuals and families from applying to become therapeutic parents.

Danica proposed that all images of traditional family be removed from recruitment ads and that terms such as marriage, husband, wife, etc. be replaced with more neutral terms such as spouse/partner in all recruitment materials (application form, autobiography, etc.).

It was agreed by all members of the group that these changes to recruitment materials were necessary. It was also agreed that further changes should be made to refine the application form and autobiography. Danica will make all the agreed changes and circulate copies to all members of the group within the next two weeks.

5.0 TRAINING - PRESERVICE AND CORE PACKAGES

Changes were suggested and agreed to for both the preservice and the core training schedules. These changes included:

a) content changes to preservice topics
b) distinguishing between core training which must be delivered in house and core training which would be better delivered by an outside resource
c) changes to the time and priority of some core training topics

Danica and Steve will meet with Mary Jane to present and finalize the agree changes. A revised training schedule will then be circulated to all members of the group.

Some concerns were expressed regarding the extended completion date for training materials. Steve explained that Mary Jane would be focusing solely on the training materials over the next six months.

6.0 SKILL FEES FOR THERAPEUTIC PARENTS

Concerns were expressed the current differences in skill fees across the agency and the lack of standardization and a fair system for determining skill fess. It was agreed that Shelley and Steve would review this issue and make recommendations to the group.

It was also agreed that the per diem and maintenance form developed by Roxanne would be faxed to Jeannette for approval and then distributed to all TFC programs for use.

7.0 FFTA CONFERENCE/UPDATE

7.1 Washington Conference

The conference in Washington is scheduled for August 15-17. It is yet to be decided who will attend the conference, however, it was generally agreed that the conference may be of most benefit to some of the newer members of the group.

7.2 Alberta FFTA

Pam Meadowcroft will be speaking in Calgary on Friday May 20, followed by a reception in the evening.

NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 12, 11:00 A.M. IN CALGARY

REGIONAL MANAGEMENT MEETING
EDMONTON/NORTH REGION
MAY 31,1994

PRESENT: Ralph Buchholz, Andrew Conn, Anton Smith, Maureen Convey-Solberg, Cathy Hardman, Hugh Nicholson, Steve Brown, Jeannette Guertin, Janet Fizzell, Danica Frazer, Brian Taje

CHAIRPERSON: Steve Brown

1.0 MANAGEMENT/ADMINISTRATION

1.1 Management Organizational Structure and Decision Making Systems

Steve distributed and organizational chart and presented an historical overview of the management organizational structure, specifically focusing on the positions of Level II Supervisors, Regional Managers, and the recently proposed position of Program Services Manager. Steve explained that there has been a great deal of confusion regarding the position of Program Services Manager. As a result, Hugh will be conducting a task analysis over the summer and designing a new job description for this position.

Steve also explained the position of Manager of Program Development, stating the position will focus on general program development and will be responsible for tasks such as the service delivery initiative, the audits, and other new program initiatives. Steve also explained that no new funding went into this position, but rather than existing monies were reallocated through Regional Managers being more embedded in programs.

Steve presented the Decision Making Model as outlined in the attached handout. Steve emphasized the importance of keeping staff informed of the various meetings, of supervisors bringing staff issues forward, and of ensuring that staff receive information from the meetings.

1.2 Review of Ongoing Wage Freeze and Hiring Freeze

Steve acknowledge the anxiety and the stress staff are feeling because of the freeze, and asked for discussion and input on how to proceed with this issue. Discussion focused on possibly lifting the hiring freeze, benefits for those staff who have been temporary, and the guidelines for determining salary level for new staff.

Steve explained that the Personnel Committee will be asked to strike a sub-committee to review the issue, and that Hugh, Steve, and Jeannette will sit on the sub-committee.

1.3 Policy Issues/Changes

1.3.1 Proposed Change to Vacation Year Cycle

Jeannette handed out figures on accrued vacation and explained that changing the vacation cycle to September-August would create liability issues for programs.

Hugh stated that he will seek permission from the Board of Directors to allow program deficits due to accrued vacations.

Supervisors agreed to get feedback from staff on the proposed vacation cycle. The issue will then go to the monthly management meeting for further discussion and a decision.

1.3.2 Statutory Holidays

Discussed the proposal to delete the requirement that staff must work for one month before being entitled to statutory holidays. It was clarified that this would apply only to permanent staff.

It was also suggested that the policy be amended so that wage staff are entitled only to mandatory statutory holidays as outlined in labour standards. This will be brought forward to the Personnel Committee.

1.3.3 Sick Leave

Reviewed and discussed the proposal that time may be given for illness of immediate family members. Although there was support for the policy on a philosophical level, there were concerns regarding the potential cost. It was

suggested that if such a policy existed, then any days taken under this policy would be debited against remaining sick days prior to the conversion of sick days to vacation days.

1.3.4 Status/Conditions of Employment

A decision has been made to make explicit that the organization makes employment decisions without regard to sexual orientation. This reflects the governance policies recently established by the Board of Directors.

1.3.5 Benefits for Same Sex Couples

Began discussions on the feasibility of providing spousal benefits to same sex couples. Reviewed the letter from Great West Life indicating that the provision of such benefits would result in an increase in premiums. It was agreed that no action will be taken on this issue at the present time.

1.3.6 Human Rights

Discussed the addition of marital status and sexual orientation to our human rights policy. This proposed amendment would apply to all individuals, including foster parent. It was requested that this amendment not be approved at this time. Steve indicated that discussions will continue at the Management and Board levels to determine if we should move ahead with this proposed policy amendment.

1.3.7 Hours of Work and Overtime

It was decided that this policy will stand as is.

2.0 STRATEGIC GOALS AND ISSUES

2.1 Service Delivery

2.1.1 Review of Progress on Service Delivery Goals

Reviewed progress made by each program on service delivery goals.

Steve explained that Consumer Service Delivery Data Forms and Issue Tracking Forms are to be on the BBS system by September 30, and that

the database system will be in place by December 31.

Steve explained that audits will be commencing in Calgary next week. Steve also explained that the audits will be individual audits which can be done at different times, not program audits. Steve requested that all supervisors submit a written proposal for individual audit times, including staff names and a proposed week. Proposals are to be in to Steve by Friday June 10.

Additional aspects of the audit process which were explained/discussed included:

- audits will become a routine part of performance appraisals and areas requiring improvement will be addressed through individualized training plans

- the audits will be done in more detail with each staff, starting with supervisors; depending on how the supervisor does, the supervisor may audit his/her own staff

- the process will start with a counselling audit; tapes can be done either with a staff member or with a consumer. In either case, it was agreed that a release form would need to be signed. Brian Taje will develop a release form. Tapes should be no longer than 30 minutes. Tapes will be reviewed by supervisors who will give feedback and develop on action plan for improvement. This feedback and action plan will be part of the supervisors' audits. Tapes should be rated using the form from the counselling training package..

2.1.2 Proposed Changes to Issues Tracking Forms

Steve presented the proposed forms and clarified that these forms are to be used only with new cases. Any feedback on the forms should be submitted to Steve by Friday June 10. Discs and hard copies will then be distributed within one week.

2.2 Fundraising

Janet informed the group that the North Region is now out of the hole with its fundraising. The group discussed monthly bingos and staff volunteers. Supervisors are to

inform Janet of what month(s) their programs would like to run a bingo. Clarification was given on how the Allocations Committee operates.

2.3 Management Information System

Hugh and Steve will be working over the summer to improve the manuals for the system and to determine protocols for using the system.

2.4 Potential Strategic Issues for 1994/1995

Steve reviewed the list of possible strategic issues in the following areas: program issues, human resource, management/administration, and service ares issues.

3.0 OTHER ISSUES

3.1 Interactions with Finance

It was agreed that both program staff and finance staff would make an effort to use a constructive and shared problem solving approach to issues when they arise.

3.2 McMan Day

It was discussed and agreed that McMan Day is not a management/administration responsibility and that the organizing of McMan day should be done through the fundraising committee.

3.3 Training on Legal Issues

Janet informed the group that Legal Aid/Student Legal Services will be presenting a training session on legal issues relating to our consumers. The session will be held in the training room at head office from 9:30 - 3:30 on July 5 or July 6. Staff can attend on either day.

NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 9, 1994 9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.

APPENDIX J

Board Governance Policies

POLICY TYPE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CONSTRAINT
POLICY AREA: STAFF AND VOLUNTEER TREATMENT

With respect to treatment of paid and volunteer staff, the Executive Director may not cause or allow conditions which are inhumane, unfair or undignified. Accordingly, he/she shall not:

1. impede access to employment, training and opportunities for advancement because of race, color, religious beliefs, gender, sexual orientation or other considerations irrelevant to job performance.

2. disregard or impede the dignity, safety and right to ethical internal dissent of employees and volunteers;

3. fail to develop and apply personnel practices that include a process under which staff or volunteers will get a fair hearing on substantial matters of their concern.

4. fail to provide a procedure under which final grievance to the Board by an aggrieved employee or volunteer is welcomed, if the complainant has:
   a) exhausted the internal procedure, and
   b) alleges that Board policy has been violated to his or her detriment or Board policy itself insufficiently recognizes human rights or employment equity considerations;

5. fail to ensure respect for confidentiality regarding organizational information about staff and volunteers;

6. fail to inform staff and volunteers of significant policies and guiding principles of the organization or significant changes affecting the organization.

7. fail to provide a compensation scheme for staff that is fair, equitable and offers competitive salaries and benefits.

8. fail to encourage skill development through attendance at seminars, conferences, short courses and workshops.

9. fail to provide staff and volunteers with Job descriptions and clear performance expectations.

10. fail to shedule regular reviews of job performance and job satisfaction.

11. fail to provide a clear understanding that sexual harassment is not acceptable and specific recourse for individuals who believe they are suffering sexual harassment.

POLICY TYPE: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CONSTRAINT
POLICY AREA: SERVICE DELIVERY

With respect to service delivery, the Executive Director may not cause or allow conditions which do not ensure the rights of clients, parents, and guardians to equitable, dignified, appropriate, and humane treatment. Accordingly, he/she shall not:

1. permit discriminatory practices, systemic or otherwise, that impede client access to services because of race, colour, religious beliefs, gender, sexual orientation, or other irrelevant considerations;

2. fail to develop and apply practices whereby the client's dignity, safety and right to dissent is ensured;

3. fail to develop and apply practices that include a process under which clients or other legally entitled parties will get a fair hearing on substantial matters of their concern;

4. permit policies or practices that deviate from the Child Welfare Act, as amended, including regulations and policy directions;

5. permit any violation of legislation or professional codes of conduct respecting confidentiality or privacy;

6. fail to provide appropriate support and intervention mechanisms to address identified client-based issues;

7. fail to develop and apply practices that ensure client rights are upheld;

8. fail to develop and apply practices that ensure clients are informed of their rights and the service delivery to be provided to them;

9. fail to develop and apply practices that allow clients and/or other legally entitled parties access to information on matters of their concern.